

September 9, 1996
8th Column
Charles hires
masseuse as
personal assistant

Egypt may reschedule MENA summit

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt said Monday it may set a new date for a regional economic conference which it has threatened to cancel if Israel does not advance the peace process. "Egypt may, in agreement with the parties concerned, set another date for the conference if circumstances favourable for its success are not met" by the scheduled date of Nov. 12-14, presidential advisor Osama Al Baz said. Mr. Baz told reporters the government was examining with the parties concerned whether holding the third economic conference for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) on the scheduled date would "promote its success" and ensure a large participation of companies and businessmen. President Hosni Mubarak threatened to cancel the conference if the Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu maintained its headline positions.

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Regent urges rehabilitation of Iraq within a regional security network

Confusion and placing issue on back burner encourages extremism and destabilisation, Crown Prince says

By Anton La Guardia
The Sunday Times

CROWN PRINCE Hassan yesterday criticised the Americans' "haphazard" policy of containing Saddam Hussein without a clear plan for the future of Iraq.

He said Washington should decide whether it aims to rehabilitate Iraq, or depose Saddam. "If you wish to see a future Iraq stable, there has to be a professional army," he said. "The army has taken such a beating. You are not talking about the internal security forces. You are talking about professional soldiers."

Speaking to The Daily Telegraph, a despondent Prince Hassan said the latest crisis in Iraq made him feel "a bit hollow". He painted a gloomy picture of America's Middle

East policy, saying that the U.S. concept of dual containment of Iraq and Iran "has failed to contain anybody."

He accused the international community of placing Iraq "on the back burner" for the past six years, prolonging the suffering of ordinary Iraqis, destroying the infrastructure of Iraq and allowing regional neighbours to destabilise the country.

Moreover, the confusion was encouraging greater extremism in the region which could, ultimately, destabilise pro-Western countries like Jordan.

"At the moment all you have is skulduggery, the use of weapons and the cynical use of the oil-for-food accord as leverage, in which the people of Iraq are paying the heaviest price," he said.

"If you continue in this

lawless manner, you are almost arguing that the person who takes the place of Saddam has to be authoritarian to be able to control the country."

The Crown Prince reiterated Jordan's position that its territory should not be used against another Arab state and called for Iraq's territorial integrity to be respected. But Prince Hassan said Jordan still wanted to see political change in Iraq. He even floated — without expressing outright support — what he called "the Yugoslavia model."

This mixed NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs, war crimes tribunals for its leaders and active American diplomacy to end the war in Yugoslavia and institute a degree of democratic government.

"While dialogue was exercised in Yugoslavia, there is no dialogue with

Iraq," he said. "The policy is all stick, and no carrot." Would Jordan endorse war crimes tribunals against Saddam? The Prince did not reply.

He also suggested the creation of a regional security network that would include Turkey, Iran and even Iraq, beyond the current members of the Arab League.

Participants would be required to abide by minimum requirements of abandoning terrorism and interference in other countries' affairs, and adopt confidence-building measures.

Such an arrangement would attempt to reproduce the success of the Helsinki process that helped to reduce cold war tensions between the West and communist eastern Europe.

As well as the troubles in Iraq to the east, there are new worries about Israel to the west. The government

of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, is much more reluctant to compromise with the Palestinians than his Labour predecessors, raising the prospect of unrest in the occupied West Bank which could also undermine Jordan. The fact that members the Likud Party have loudly denounced

Mr. Netanyahu's meeting with the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, was "rather worrying," said Prince Hassan.

There was the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which created a flood of refugees into Jordan.

Amman's studied neutrality, bordering on support for Iraq, cut it off for some years from the West and, more importantly, from the wealthy Gulf Arab states.

The sanctions against Iraq, Jordan's main trading partner, have been a blow for the Jordanian economy.



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and members of the Cabinet on Monday are greeted by local leaders in the Hashemi area of eastern Amman (Petra photo)

Kabariti: Jordan is on threshold of new era of progress, achievements

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti expressed confidence Monday that the Kingdom was on the threshold of a new era of progress and achievements having emerged stronger from the difficult decade during which the people had to make numerous sacrifices.

Addressing a public rally during a visit he made to the Hashemi district in eastern Amman, Mr. Kabariti said his government will spare no efforts in attempts to achieve progress and prosperity for all Jordanians and away "from pity personal considerations and without rushing to achieve quick results."

"We are determined to act responsibly and diligently despite the difficulties and hardships facing our nation," Mr. Kabariti said.

He said that as a result of hard work and dedication to the country, "we have realised many achievements which could not be accomplished by countries with resources many times those of Jordan."

Mr. Kabariti noted the

respect which the country enjoys at the pan-Arab and international levels, adding that Jordanian citizens enjoy respect everywhere, live in democracy, enjoy civil and political rights and live in an atmosphere marked by equality and dignity and social peace and tranquility.

He said the country had been able to build excellent infrastructure for various services and institutions and modern utilities.

"These achievements encourage us to do more and act more diligently towards further accomplishments and more construction and more progress," he said.

"We have witnessed a very difficult decade during which the Jordanian people had to offer great sacrifices but we are on the threshold of a new era which augurs well for the future of the Kingdom," said Mr. Kabariti.

Mr. Kabariti said Jordan had paid a dear price for Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the subsequent developments in Iraq and the whole region. But he said Jordan had achieved a

great deal under the guidance of His Majesty King Hussein.

Mr. Kabariti said Jordan, in its drive to overcome difficulties and achieve progress, had to carry out an economic reform programme "which will help the country achieve further development and progress."

Several speakers, including the district's deputy in Parliament, Theeb Abdullah, addressed the rally presenting the prime minister with requests for improving services in their region.

Mr. Kabariti said that Jordanians should understand and appreciate the government's recent measures.

In reference to demands that death sentences on a number of convicted be commuted, the prime minister said that this matter can only be tackled by the King but promised to carry this request to King Hussein on behalf of the local citizens.

He promised that questions like housing, school buildings, youth centres, municipal and postal ser-

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Sulaimaniyeh falls to Barzani

Clinton: U.S. doing everything to get CIA allies out of northern Iraq

Combined agency
dispatches

THE IRAQI-BACKED Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) on Monday seized the last stronghold of its main Kurdish rivals in northern Iraq, as thousands of Kurdish refugees fled towards the Iranian border.

The KDP seized Sulaimaniyeh at 7 p.m. (1500 GMT) from the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the group's London spokesman Dilshad Miran said.

U.N. guards and officials confirmed Massoud Barzani captured Sulaimaniyeh.

"The battle for Sulaimaniyeh is over. Massoud Barzani fighters have entered the city without fighting," one U.N. official told Reuters by telephone

from Erbil. Aid workers in Sulaimaniyeh told AFP by telephone that "the yellows have arrived," in a reference to the yellow KDP flag.

The city of around 800,000 people was practically deserted when it fell because thousands of inhabitants had fled into the mountains near the Iranian border ahead of the KDP advance, the aid workers said.

PUK leader Jalal Talabani, who set up his headquarters in Sulaimaniyeh after his former stronghold of Erbil fell on Aug. 31, also left the city during the day and was sheltering in Penjwin on the Iranian border, inhabitants said.

The fall of Sulaimaniyeh leaves the KDP in control of all the main cities in the Kurdish-held north of Iraq,

10 days after it called in President Saddam Hussein's troops to help it capture Erbil from the PUK.

In Washington President Bill Clinton announced Monday that Washington was "doing everything (it) can" in Iraq to help "those who have worked" with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to flee the country in the wake of Baghdad's recent northern offensive.

Mr. Clinton was responding to questions about the fate of Kurds who worked with the CIA in a bid to destabilise the regime of President Saddam.

Iraq's recent military incursion into north had threatened these members of the opposition, some of whom were reportedly executed by Iraqi security forces.

Mr. Clinton told reporters the United States was "doing everything (it) can" to help anybody that needs to be out of Iraq.

"We have done everything we could to make it clear to the Kurds that we think that there shouldn't be any cavalier killing of civilians and other who are not combatants," Mr. Clinton added.

"We are doing everything we believe we can do and that we think is appropriate."

Mr. Clinton insisted that "the primary fight is being carried on between the ... Kurdish forces," suggesting that the Iraqi military presence had dwindled significantly.

News of Sulaimaniyeh's capture was greeted with celebratory gunfire and rockets in Erbil.

KDP radio congratulated its Peshmergas on their advance and heaped scorn on "Jalal (Talabani), who fled like a rat."

The KDP's announcement came after it stormed a string of other PUK-held towns north of Sulaimaniyeh on Sunday and Monday, prompting desperate appeals for U.S. intervention from the PUK.

Shortly before Sulaimaniyeh fell, the PUK called for U.S. help to "prevent an imminent massacre."

"Saddam Hussein's tanks, army and secret police are advancing northward to Sulaimaniyeh," a PUK statement said.

"The United States and its allies cannot abandon the people of Kurdistan to the

(Continued on page 7)

Israel and PLO resume final status negotiations

JERICHO (Agencies) — Israelis and Palestinians resumed negotiations Monday aimed at finalising the much-delayed implementation of their 1993 agreements extending Palestinian self-rule.

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erakat said the three-hour meeting touched on a long list of Israeli failures to implement the 1993 interim accords on Palestinian autonomy, and notably on Israel's delayed withdrawal from Hebron.

"We have exchanged ideas on the mechanisms and modalities for implementing the agreements," Mr. Erakat said following the talks, the first encounter of the Israeli-Palestinian steering committee since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his right-wing government were elected in May.

Mr. Erakat submitted a list of some 30 aspects of

the agreement signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel's former Labour government in Washington on Sept. 13, 1993, which Israel had yet to implement.

He said Israeli delegation head Dan Shomron "promised he would take it (his) government to discuss it."

Mr. Erakat said Monday's talks also touched on Israel's closure of the Palestinian territories, the overdue release of thousands of Palestinians in Israeli jails, Israel's decision to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank and obstacles to opening the first Palestinian airport in Gaza.

Concerning the Israeli withdrawal from Hebron, the most important unfulfilled aspect of the Oslo accords, Mr. Erakat said no specific dates had been dis-

Netanyahu opens talks in U.S.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu began meetings here Monday with U.S. leaders who pressed for "concrete steps" from his government to further mend relations with the Palestinians.

Mr. Netanyahu, who met with Secretary of State Warren Christopher for a first round of talks, also said he hoped to discuss plans to resume negotiations with Syria that were suspended seven months ago.

The Israeli prime minister was to hold talks later in the day with President Bill

Baghdad offers to keep PKK away from entering Turkey

ANKARA (Agencies) — In a sign that Baghdad has strengthened its hold in Kurdish-controlled areas, Iraq on Monday offered to cooperate with Ankara to keep Turkish Kurdish rebels from crossing into Turkey.

Iraqi Ambassador Rafi Dahham Mejlwi Al Tikriti met with Deputy Foreign Minister Onur Oymen to relay Baghdad's opposition to Kurdish moves to establish a buffer zone along its 330-kilometre border with northern Iraq.

An Iraqi delegation, led by Hamed Yousef Humadi, an adviser to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, will discuss the Iraqi offer in Ankara on Tuesday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller indicated earlier Monday that Turkey may not deploy troops in a "security zone" it plans to create in northern Iraq to check infiltration by Turkish Kurdish rebels.

Mrs. Ciller, speaking to

reporters here, said: "Our priority is not to send troops into northern Iraq. Our priority is to set up a defence in the region against infiltration by the (Kurdish separatist group the) PKK."

"The establishment of this defence is aimed only at preventing terrorists from entering Turkish territory," the foreign minister said in a reference to the PKK, the Kurdish Labour Party routinely described as "terrorists."

She hotly denied suggestions that Turkey planned to occupy a slice of northern Iraq and expressed support for the territorial integrity of its neighbour.

"Nobody should believe that Turkey is getting ready to occupy northern Iraq," she said. "Turkey, more than any other country, places importance in the territorial integrity of Iraq."

The Turkish-Iraqi border was calm on Monday with no reports of troop move-

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan regrets Iranian move to stall trade deal, but rejects criticism

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan on Monday expressed regret over a decision by the Iranian parliament to suspend for several months the voting on a draft law on trade with Jordan and stressed the Kingdom's desire to maintain the strong trade links with Iran.

Commenting on the Sunday's decision by the Iranian Majlis (parliament), Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Srour said that "Jordan at the parliamentary and governmental and non-official levels, is keen on promoting ties with all friendly nations, including Iran, and on maintaining excellent cooperation with other countries on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs."

"As much as we had hoped that the draft law would be passed to enhance economic cooperation between Iran and Jordan, we equally reject any attempts on the part of any party to outbid us or belittle the great sacrifices which Jordan has offered in defence of the nation foremost of which is the Palestinian cause," added Mr. Srour.

"We also are surprised to learn of reports that mem-

bers of the Iranian Majlis had made irresponsible statements in which they unduly attacked Jordan's national stand. No member of that council has the right to claim that he is more keen on the nation's interests than Jordan," added Mr. Srour.

Tehran Radio said last Sunday a bill to establish trade ties with Jordan was suspended Sunday for six months by the Iranian parliament. No vote was taken on the bill.

"Several lawmakers expressed their opposition to the bill because of Jordan's positive stance towards Israel," the state-run radio said.

Mr. Srour said: "We respect the council's decision although we consider it to be wrong. But our respect stems from our absolute faith in the principles of democracy. At the same time we hardly see that such decision would serve the cause of cooperation between our two countries, especially as council members have levelled unjust accusations against the Kingdom."

He said Jordan would pursue efforts to promote its parliamentary relations

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Berri says coalition won in S. Lebanon

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The Syrian-imposed coalition between the pro-Syrian Amal movement and Iran-backed Hizbollah won 21 of the 23 seats at stake Sunday in South Lebanon, Lebanese parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri announced Monday.

Mr. Berri said his Amal movement won 17 seats in the 128-member parliament from South Lebanon while Hizbollah won four seats in Sunday's fourth round of voting in the country's staggered general elections.

The other two seats went to Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's sister, Bahia Hariri, and Mustapha Saad, who won the two Sunni Muslim constituencies in the southern city of Sidon that did not figure in the coalition agreement.

Sidon had witnessed a fierce battle between Ms. Hariri, backed by Amal, and Mr. Saad who was supported by Hizbollah. According to unofficial final results, Ms. Hariri received 145,000 votes and

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Taleban claim control of eastern district

ISLAMABAD (IR) — Afghanistan's rebel Taleban militia said on Monday it had captured the Hissarak district in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

Qari Jalaluddin, a Taleban spokesman in Peshawar, northwest Pakistan, told Reuters by telephone that Taleban forces took the district on Sunday night and were now fighting for the nearby Tehsin area. He said 15 Hissarak defenders were killed, while only one Taleban fighter was killed and two were wounded.

But sources in the council ruling Nangarhar rejected the Taleban report and said there was no fighting in the area.

Haji Qadeer, the provincial governor, said in a statement in Jalalabad on Sunday that his council had remained neutral in the four-year-old fighting between President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government in Kabul and its opponents.

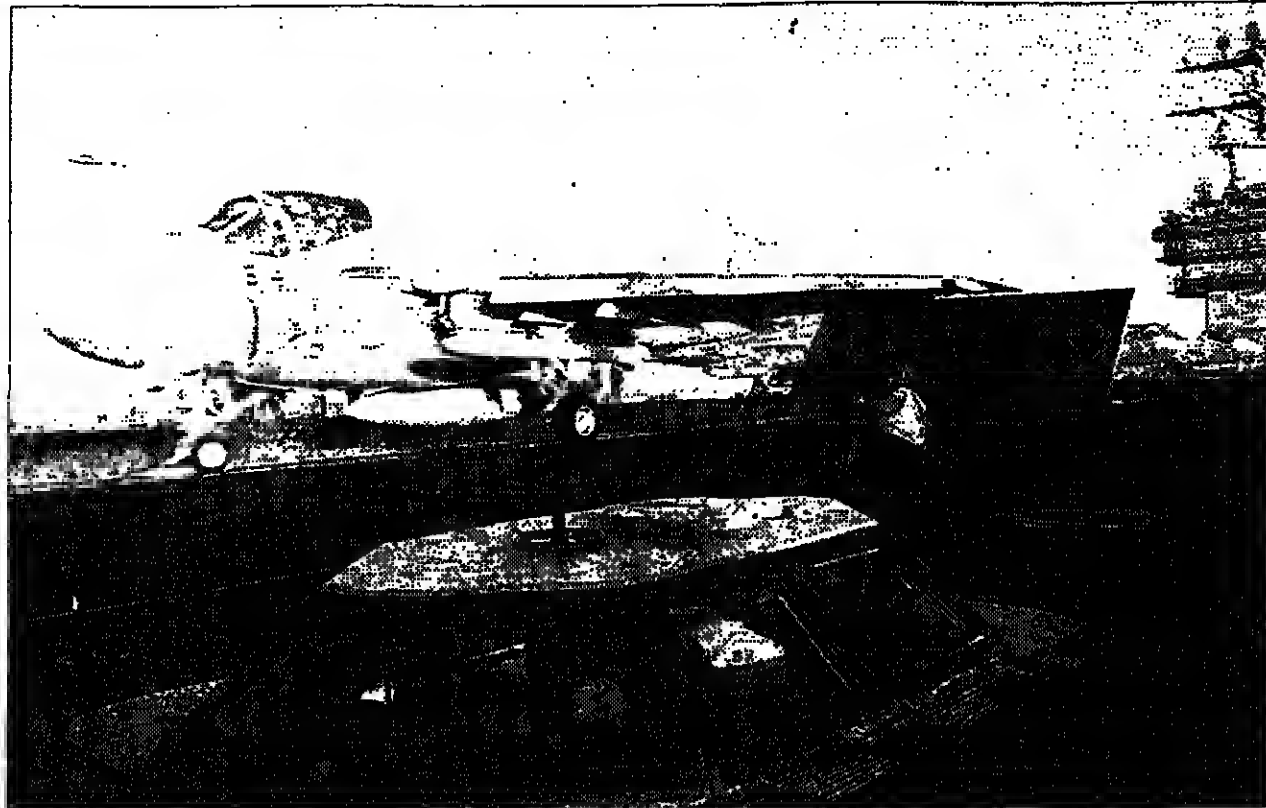
But if either the government or its opponents attack the council-ruled areas, the council's forces will join the other side, he said.

A spokesman for Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar had said in Kabul on Saturday that forces commanded by the Nangarhar council were fighting on the government side against the advancing Taleban forces in Hissarak district.

Meanwhile, witnesses in the Afghan capital of Kabul saw dozens of tanks and armoured personnel carriers on the streets, on Monday, apparently heading for the strategic eastern town of Sarobi, which officials fear could be the next Taleban target. Taleban forces also shelled some areas in Kabul overnight and on Monday morning, killing at least four people and wounding 12, hospital sources there said.

Monday's report of the capture of Hissarak came three days after the Taleban, which controls about half of Afghanistan, seized the strategic, government-held district of Azra in the adjoining Logar province. An Afghan government spokesman in Kabul said on Friday that the militia's eastern thrust seemed aimed at Sarobi, about 60 kilometres east of Kabul, and controlling the main eastern highway to Pakistan.

Sarobi has long been a stronghold of Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami party. But Taleban advances last month against the Hezb-e-Islami in neighbouring Paktia province prompted fears it might be the next target of the militia, which has sworn to oust Mr. Rabbani and impose strict Islamic rule throughout Afghanistan.



A U.S. Navy A-6 intruder bomber, watched by technicians in a 'bubble,' is prepared for takeoff from the deck of American aircraft carrier U.S.S. Carl Vinson during its patrol of the Gulf on Sunday as part of "Operation Southern Watch," which includes the policing of the newly extended no-fly zone in Iraq (Reuters photo)

Iran assails GCC over 'Persian Gulf islands'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran criticised Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states Monday for what it called their "misguided" stand on a dispute involving three islands in the Gulf claimed by both Tehran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"This misguided stand is making the problem more complicated," the official Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmud Mohammadi as saying.

He described the GCC meeting held in Riyadh over the weekend between the foreign ministers of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE as "futile."

GCC members criticised Iran at the meeting for "failing to respond to the repeated and sincere appeals of the United

Arab Emirates for a peaceful settlement of the island question."

They also denounced "Iranian moves aimed at enshrining their occupation of the islands," calling them "a violation of the sovereignty of the Emirates."

Mr. Mohammadi said that instead of criticising Iran and "throwing doubt on Iranian sovereignty over these islands," GCC states "should have encouraged the leaders of the Emirates to pursue their dialogue with Tehran."

He added that Iran remained "ready to hold negotiations with the Emirates to clear up the differences between two brotherly Islamic nations."

The UAE has asked that the territorial dispute be placed before the international court of justice in the Hague, which Iran rejects.

Militants kill 30 people in Algeria, report says

CAIRO (AP) — Militants in Algeria killed 30 people and kidnapped five women in two attacks on buses last week, an Arabic-language newspaper reported Monday.

The London-based daily Al Hayat said militants attacked a highway near the border with Tunisia. Several men boarded the bus and forced six women and all the men between ages 18 and 30 to get off, Al Hayat said, quoting "information from inside Algeria."

The bodies of 18 people, including one of the women, were later found further down the road, the newspaper said. The other five women were apparently abducted to nearby mountains, about 20 kilometres south of the border town of Batna.

In another incident, the newspaper said 12 people were killed Friday in a similar ambush in Ghardaya, south-east of Algiers.

Details on both attacks were sketchy.

Last month, Al Hayat reported that militants posing as policemen shot and hacked at least 63 people to death in what would have been some of the worst bloodshed in the four-year civil war.

The newspaper said that attack was carried out by more than 100 militants armed with rifles, daggers and axes who stormed two buses after setting up fake police barricades.

The Algerian government called the report "totally unfounded." Al Hayat, a popular and respected newspaper, stood by the report, which it attributed to reliable sources.

'CIA chief personally pledged to topple Saddam'

LOS ANGELES (IR) — Before Saddam Hussein's attack on Kurds in northern Iraq, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director John Deutch had personally promised that the Iraqi leader would be toppled within a year, the Los Angeles Times reported on Sunday.

But President Saddam discovered and foiled a \$20-million covert operation to unseat him, the paper reported.

"This is one of the greatest setbacks U.S. intelligence has ever suffered," an anonymous senior U.S. official told the Times.

The paper offered no details about the personal pledge by Mr. Deutch to dislodge President Saddam, but sources described the six-year intelligence operation as the largest authorised by President Bill Clinton. The plot's failure, those sources said, put the United States back to square one in dealing with Iraq.

According to the sources who spoke to the Times, American intelligence officials had considered a cadre of Iraqi agents operating inside the country vital to the mission, but many of the agents had been exposed and executed.

The paper reported that a CIA plot to overthrow President Saddam from within the ranks of his Republican Guard was uncovered in late June and early July, with hundreds of military officers arrested and dozens of agents executed.

"It was an ambitious effort, but it was uncovered long before it got anywhere," a source told the Times. "It was basically wiped out in June and July. A lot of (Iraqi) U.S.

Oil deal delay harms Iraqis' health — minister

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's health minister said on Monday the health situation in his country was serious and condemned U.S. attempts to delay the implementation of Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the United Nations.

"We are suffering from a really grave situation," Umeed Madhat Mubarak told reporters. Asked about Washington's insistence to suspend the oil-for-food scheme Iraq signed with the United Nations on May 20, he said: "From a humanitarian point of view we should condemn that."

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali delayed implementing the deal after Iraqi forces attacked Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq on Aug. 31, saying he

feared for the safety of U.N. staff.

U.S. President Bill Clinton also said he wanted the plan suspended for the time being.

"It is inhuman and unfair," Dr. Mubarak, a cardiologist, said. "It is a unilateral decision made by the U.S. administration."

Dr. Mubarak said Iraq had been preparing to receive medical supplies under the deal which would have enabled it to resume emergency activities in hospitals, improve the situation in the field of preventive medicine and provide people suffering from chronic diseases with "proper doses of drugs."

He said 168 new-born babies were now dying out

of 1,000 live births, up from 24 before the United Nations imposed a strict trade embargo on Iraq in 1990 for invading Kuwait.

Dr. Mubarak said his ministry was to receive \$210 million of that sum. Asked whether health allocations under the oil-for-food programme would have helped ease Iraqis' suffering, he said: "Definitely yes."

Dr. Mubarak said the breakdown of sewage systems, lack of clean water and frequent cuts in power supply further aggravated the health situation in Iraq.

He lambasted Washington for its tough stand on sanctions, saying Iraq had honoured Gulf war obligations which would allow oil exports. "But there is somebody creating prob-

lems for dirty political ends and that is the United States," he said.

The minister said the situation in northern Iraq in the aftermath of Iraq's military incursion did not justify putting off the oil-for-food formula.

Dr. Mubarak himself a Kurd from the northern Kurdish city of Sulaimaniyah, also criticised Washington over reports of a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) plot to overthrow the government of President Saddam Hussein.

"The enemies of humanity in Iraq — on top of them of course the Clinton administration — can create a problem any day, any hour," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Anonymous caller threatens Netanyahu

TEL AVIV (AP) — An anonymous caller to police threatened to kill Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu unless Yitzhak Rabin's assassin is released from prison, police said Monday. The call was received Sunday by police in Kfar Saba, a town northeast of Tel Aviv, said police spokeswoman Nitza Friedman. The caller said Mr. Netanyahu would be killed unless authorities freed Mr. Rabin's killer, Yigal Amir, who is serving a life prison term. Police traced the call to a public phone booth and arrested a suspect. Ms. Friedman said the man was later released, and Israel Radio said police did not have enough evidence to link him to the call. Amir opposed Mr. Rabin's land-for-peace agreements with the Palestinians and shot the prime minister during a Nov. 4 peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Olmert to face corruption charge — agency

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's attorney-general has decided to indict Jerusalem's Ehud Olmert, Israeli mayor, of the ruling Likud Party on corruption charges, the domestic Itim news agency reported on Sunday. Mr. Olmert, one of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's close political allies, is being investigated on allegations he solicited illegal donations for Likud while serving as party treasurer during the 1988 election campaign. The news agency said the attorney-general would ask legislators to lift the immunity Mr. Olmert enjoys as a member of parliament. Last month, the justice minister in Mr. Netanyahu's government resigned after police said they were investigating suspicions he had suborned a witness in his work as a private attorney.

Egyptian armed forces to stage war games

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's armed forces will begin large-scale war games Tuesday aimed at assessing the combat skill of the troops, Defence and Military Production Minister Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi said. "The aim of the Badr 96 manoeuvres is to assess the combat skills of the armed forces. They are not aimed against anyone," Mr. Tantawi said in statements carried Monday by the government daily Al-Ahram. "It is part of a comprehensive training plan made to serve Egypt's purposes regardless of the situation in the area or anywhere in the world," he said after a visit to the second field army in Ismailiya. He described Badr 96 as Egypt's largest-ever strategic war games and said they would be much bigger than the previous manoeuvres known as Badr 93. New weapons which he did not identify will be used in the exercises.

Protest after Israeli school separates students

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Parents protested outside a suburban Tel Aviv high school Monday over a decision by administrators at the religious institute to separate Ashkenazi and Sephardic students. "It's racism, pure and simple," complained one of the parents gathered outside the ultra-orthodox Shaarei Ha-Aharon high school in Bnei Brak, a strict religious community outside Tel Aviv. The protest followed a decision by the school to include girls from the Sephardic community of Middle Eastern Jews in classes with Ashkenazis. Jews from Eastern Europe, Deputy Education Minister Arieh Ganiel, a Sephardic rabbi, also denounced the school's decision and demanded the resignation of Bnei Brak Mayor Amos Ben-Haim. "It is unacceptable to discriminate like this between children, and between Jews," he said. Ultra-orthodox Jews run their own schools, but with government subsidies. Conflict between Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews has been a fact of life in Israel since its creation. Sephardic Jews complain of economic and social discrimination by Ashkenazis who dominate business and government.

Germany pledges continuing aid to peace

BONN (AFP) — Germany will continue to provide economic aid to the Middle East peace process, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel assured his Israeli counterpart David Levy here Monday. Speaking at a joint press conference, Mr. Kinkel said: "Germany wishes to contribute with aid in the economic sphere." Noting disquiet at current stagnation in the peace process, the German official stressed that Bonn could not be a political intermediary in the Middle East. But he ruled out any interruption of economic aid, saying this would be perceived as a bad signal. Mr. Levy described Germany as a "reliable partner" of Israel. He said his government would continue the peace process but rejected ultimatums. This was a reference to Syria's insistence on the return of the Golan Heights which Israel captured in 1967.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:05Captain Planet
15:30Hoi Shoi (Sports)
16:00Bob Morrison Show
16:30Comedy — ALF
17:00News Flash
17:02Sciences Cartoon
17:15La Vie Devant Moi
17:30Game Show — Pyramide
18:00 Varieties — Les Trans-musicales de Rennes
19:00Le Journal
19:15Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30News Headlines
19:33Blossom
20:00Documentary — Man Alive
20:30Encounter
21:10Star Trek — The Next Generation
22:00News in English
22:20Mission Impossible
23:10Sisters

PRAYER TIMES

04:13Fajr
05:42Sunrise/Dhuhr
12:42Dhuhr
16:23Asr
19:42Maghrib
21:11Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661787

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652836

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with temperatures slightly below average and winds northwesterly moder-

ate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Amman18/29

Aqaba25/37

Deserts17/34

Jordan Valley23/36

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 46 per cent, Aqaba 47 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Wisam Hazzayin748563

Dr. Mukhlis Mazharab820425

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayim620115

Dr. Mundher Al Qraini779959

Ferdows pharmacy778336

Al Asena pharmacy637055

Al Salam pharmacy636730

Yacoub pharmacy644945

Shmeisani pharmacy637660

Nairoukh pharmacy623672

Najib pharmacy847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazin Abu Bakir276852

Dr. Ziyad Jghatim992991

Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111

Civil Defence Dept.661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192621111

637777

Fire Brigade617101

Blood Bank775121

Highway Police843402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Department630321

Hotel Complaints805800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints897467

Amman Municipality Complaints787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs661101

Jordan Television773111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority815615

Electric Power Company636381

RJ Flight Information 08-55200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-55200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/2

Khalidi Maternity644281/6

Aldileh Maternity64341/2

Jabal Amman Maternity643362

Malhas, J. Amman636140

Palestine, Shmeisani607071

Shmeisani Hospital669131

University Hospital845845

Al-Muhsen Hospital 667227/8

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/5

Al-Bashir775111/26

Army, Marka891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323

Zarqa National Hospital09900560

Ibn Sina Hospital09986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital09990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital02127555

Greek Catholic Hospital02127275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital021247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:00Damascus (RJ)

09:15Sanaa (RJ)

10:15 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)

10:20Beirut (RJ)

10:35Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:50Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

14:05New York (RJ)

17:20Cairo (RJ)

17:30London (RJ)

17:40Frankfurt (RJ)

18:25 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

19:45 Toronto, Montreal, Amsterdam (add) (RJ)

20:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

05:40London (BA)

09:15Cairo (MS)

13:40Abu Dhabi (GF)

14:00Riyadh (SV)

14:00Munich (YP)

16:00Rome (AZ)

16:30Dubai (EK)

19:35Amsterdam (KL)

20:20London (BA)

20:20Aden (IY)

21:10Beirut (ME)

22:00Tel Aviv (LY)

00:55Bucharest (RO)

03:00Kuwait (KL)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights



HRH PRINCE TALAL VISITS RJ: Director of the National Security Council Prince Talal Ben Mohammad Monday called on Royal Jordanian (RJ) and met with the chairman of its board of directors Basel Jarrah and was briefed on the reconstruction process of RJ (Petra photo)

Ministry of Supply curtails contamination in local markets

By Isam Qadmani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Monday requested the Ministry of Supply to step up control measures over food prices and intensify inspection of local markets to ensure that the products sold there are fit for human consumption.

Mr. Kabariti, who made the request in a telephone conversation with Minister of Supply Munir Sobar during the latter's inspection of markets in downtown Amman, stressed the need to stem any price manipulations or tampering with product quality.

For the fourth straight day Mr. Sobar toured different local markets within the Amman governorate accompanied by other ministry officials to ensure that ministry regulations concerning prices and the quality of food commodities are being followed.

Mahmoud Abu Hazim, a senior ministry official accompanying Mr. Sobar said that 20 inspection teams have been formed to monitor the market's operations in the Amman region alone and that the inspectors are visiting the appointed districts from 7:30 am until 10 p.m. daily.

He said that the inspectors and the ministry will continue to accept public complaints and that they will be directly acted upon.

Mr. Abu Hazim said that during Monday's work the inspectors issued 71 fines to merchants found to violate such regulations and that these infractions ranged from hiking prices to hoarding foodstuffs to the sale of food past its noted expiration date or otherwise deemed "unfit for human consumption".

Among the violators he said were owners of restaurants, bakeries and grocery stores.

Meanwhile Mr. Sobar announced during his tour on Monday that the Ministry of Supply has made arrangements for importing olive oil from Tunisia and Spain through local agents with whom agreement on final prices will be concluded within two days time.

He said that the ministry will begin operations on Thursday and will sell the oil through the Civil and Military Service Consumer Corporations.

The minister stated that the oil shipments from Spain and Tunisia will be enough to cover the needs of local markets until the beginning of domestic production begins in November.

'Green channel' plan releases exporters from customs inspections

AMMAN (Petra) — Finance Minister Marwan Awad announced Monday that preparations have been completed for the introduction of so-called "green channel" procedures aimed at helping Jordanian exporters boost their competitive edge on the international level.

He said that 26 major industrial companies have been selected as the first companies to benefit from these procedures adding that these companies' exports exceeded JD 20 million in 1995 or that their sales taxes exceeded JD 1 million in the same year.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Sunday said that under the plan products which will be imported as input to export-oriented industry will be exempted from detailed customs inspections.

He said that customs on these inputs will be collected based on documents presented by the importers and that the introduction of the "green channel" plan is slated to begin on Sept. 15.

Mr. Awad Monday listed the 26 companies which include the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company and the Jordan Cement Factories Company and said that the companies must fill out designated forms and present required documents to any of four officially designated customs centres in the Amman area.

The Prime Minister has stated that the move has as its objective the removal of barriers and procedures hindering the flow of trade, as well as the bettering of the investment environment in Jordan.

Jordanian exporters and economists described the plan as a step in the right direction.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

- * Children's film "Noddy Goes to Toyland & Garfield on the Town" at the British Council at 5:00 p.m.
- * Iranian film "Badok" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 7:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * Works by artists from France, Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, and Egypt entitled "Tapis Volants" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 24.
- * Wrought-iron exhibition by Salim Bandak at Kan Zaman (Tel. 736449), until Sept. 15.
- * Works by Batoul Al Fakiki at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 687598), until Sept. 11.
- * Summer '96 exhibition at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 8.

'Honour crime victims constitute up to double the officially released figures'

AMMAN (J.T.) — So-called "crimes of honour" have begun to fall under increased scrutiny and in a seminar on violence in schools HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, addressed the issue stating that educational institutions also have a stake in their edification.

In a recent seminar the Regent avowed that it must be clear to society and its various institutions that "crimes of honour" have no religious justification whatsoever nor are they sanctioned by Arab patrimony.

"Should we continue to accept the present state of affairs, confusing between acts of revenge which are alien to our heritage on the one hand and the freedom allotted to students on the other, and if we continue to condone the false concept of 'crimes of honour' which can only unravel the fabric of society we would be abandoning the concept of civilised life," he said.

He said, the time has come for society to draw a line in this matter and stop describing this level of violence as a crime of 'honour' adding that the time has come for educational institutions to shoulder responsibility in this concern.

The issue of "crimes of honour" was the theme of a speech given at the seminar by reporter Rana Hussein who noted that in the past 10 years so-called "crimes of honour" were the main given justification for murders in the Kingdom.

In this ten year period, she maintained, an annual average of 24 "crimes of honour" are committed.

"[However] doctors, lawyers and women rights activists insist that the actual victims of these crimes are double the released official figures," Ms. Hussein said.

She maintained that Islamic law does not provide any justification for the murder of women under the pretext of the blenching of the family's honour, and further stated that "the killing of women is only permitted in the case of adultery and only then if four witnesses attest to having witnessed the accused actually commit the transgression."

She underlined that it is the law which governs penalties and therefore, in her opinion, it is the legislation which must instigate its own revision that more severe penalties are imposed on those who commit such criminal acts.

But she said that under the 1960 Jordanian Penal Code a person accused of committing a "crime of honour" receives a relatively light sentence as compared with murders for other motivations.

The two-day seminar on violence in schools, which ended Monday, recommended the appointment of educational counsellors in public and private schools and the introduction of programmes designed to help students foster a sense of belonging to their school and nation.

The seminar also recommended that teachers be given training courses on how to control students' anger, deal with their colleagues, and said that research on generally directed violence as well as the "crimes of honour" should be stepped up and, finally, that efforts should be made to ensure a consistent communication between educators and guardians.

In his opening address on the first day of the seminar Sunday the Regent touched on encroachments of social defence particularly mentioning these so-called "crimes of honour" and stating "when we talk about values we are actually talking about the state's honour."

Opposition groups prepare press statement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Parliamentary opposition has announced a press conference scheduled for tomorrow to report their continuing dismay over last month's decisions to lift bread and animal feed subsidies and other concerns regarding domestic policy, according to a statement issued.

The group met Sunday at the Hall of Portraits in Parliament to discuss these government resolutions and subsequent popular protests stemming from increases in the prices of various commodities.

"There has been an overwhelming feeling of public indignation stemming from the raise in prices of basic commodities resulting from the government's errant policies and we have resolved to convene at the Hall of Portraits Wednesday to discuss various domestic issues and the increase of prices which have left negative social and psychological effects on the public, said the group's statement following the first meeting.

They will also discuss Jordan's relations with other Arab countries and the question of public freedoms, the statement continued.

The group has decided to send a memorandum to the government expressing their concern over a decision by state universities to deny entry to those who average less than 76 per cent on the Tawjihi.

The deputies are demanding that all successful students be accepted into public universities and have demonstrated their regret over a government decision to deny 500 students the chance of receiving Iraqi scholarships.

The memorandum also expressed "the deputies dissatisfaction with the manner in which students accepted have been distributed to various colleges away from their homes which cause the students additional financial burdens."

The deputies have stated the appointment of a special committee to prepare a full statement to be presented to the press on Wednesday.

Israeli tourism minister promises to look into visa issuance procedures

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav Monday promised to ease the problems faced by Jordanians applying for visas to enter Israel and further stated that Jordan and Israel are planning to open consulates in Eilat and Aqaba to facilitate the movement of tourists from both sides.

Mr. Katsav, addressing a press conference after talks with his Jordanian counterpart, Saleh Irsheidat, also rejected as groundless fears that Israeli visitors to Jordan felt they "had a right to" some of the ancient Biblical sites in the Kingdom.

"As far as we are concerned, Israeli visitors to Jordan do not have anything more than cultural motivations," said Mr. Katsav, adding that sites such as the Aharon's tomb in the south were of religious significance to Jews.

But he denied any further motivation apart from this bearing, he said.

"We do not intend to go beyond the cultural motivations," said the minister.

"We have full respect for Jordan's cultural heritage."

"You should be proud that Jordan has sites which are holy to Christians, Muslims and Jews..." he told the questioner. There should not be any obstacle "to allow me as a Jew to visit these places," he added, noting that Israel also has places holy to Muslims, Christians and Jews "...just as some European countries have. Prague has religious holy places for Jews..."

Replying to the same question, Mr. Irsheidat maintained that Jordan did not attach any religious significance to the tourist attractions of the Kingdom.

Such sites, he said, were for "humanity...and open for all people regardless of where they come from..."

"Jordan is an open-air museum," said the minister.

Replying to other questions, Mr. Katsav said the delays in issuing visas to Jordanians was for the most part related to "security" problems.

"We will try our best" to ease the procedures related to the issuance of visas to Jordanians, he promised.

Jordanian applicants have been complaining of lengthy delays and refusals of visas by the Israeli embassy here. The Israeli mission in turn says that the process involves clearance from security authorities.

Another reason cited by Israeli officials to explain such delays and occasional refusal of visas to Jordanians was concerns sparked by incidents where some visitors opt to remain and work in Israel.

Mr. Irsheidat told the press that the issuance of Israeli visas to Jordanians was an important issue that was discussed during talks with Mr. Katsav, who is also deputy prime minister in the government of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

Also discussed were Jordanians' complaints of had treatment-by-Israeli guards at the crossings between the two countries, and Mr. Irsheidat indicated that Mr. Katsav had also promised to study the issue and possibilities for its resolution.

The Israeli tourism minister told the press conference that he had been receiving "complaints (over visa procedures) not only from Jordanians, but also from Europeans, Americans and Japanese..." and was studying the issue.

Mr. Irsheidat and Mr. Katsav, who paid the first visit by an Israeli tourism minister to Jordan after the two countries signed an agreement on cooperation in tourism in April 1995, described their talks as successful.

Both ministers noted that problems such as visa procedures were expected to be tackled by a joint technical commission that was set up during their meetings Monday morning.

The commission will include the secretary-generals of the ministries of tourism as well as the directors of external relations of the ministries of tourism of the two countries.

The commission, which has a broader mandate on the multilateral level of Jordanian-Israeli cooperation in tourism, will hold its first meeting on Oct. 22.

According to official figures, around 110,000 Israelis visited Jordan in 1995 and 56,000 in the first eight months of this year, representing a seven per cent increase over the corresponding period for the previous year.

Mr. Irsheidat said 14,000 Jordanians visited Israel in 1995, the bulk of them as members of tour groups organised by private operators.

No figure was immediately available on Jordanian visitors to Israel so far this year.

950,000 dunums slated for cereals

AMMAN (Petra) — A decision by the Agricultural Council earlier this week to grow cereals on 950,000 dunums of land in Jordan with an expected output of 150,000 tonnes of wheat was among a series of measures adopted by the government to boost domestic food output, Minister of Agriculture Mustafa Sheikhat said Monday.

Addressing the opening of a two-day annual technical meeting organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the minister said the new measures should be backed by continued agricultural research programmes in order to discover current methods for promoting agricultural production.

He said that modern agriculture and increased production rely on advanced technology and that research centres could help Jordan apply advanced methods to achieve an increase in food production.

Dr. Sheikhat stated that his ministry was concerned with agricultural development, rural community development, and the work of cattle breeders and food producers.

ICARDA regional coordinator Nasri Haddad outlined the general duties of the centre noting that ICARDA has been closely cooperating with the Kingdom in their search to find solutions to numerous agricultural problems and that such collaboration has resulted in improved output of wheat, barley, lentils, chick peas and animal feed as well as rainfall collection, water resource management and the creation of pasture lands.

Currently ICARDA is implementing the Mashreq Project which aims to increase production of barley, forage and sheep.

This project focuses on transferring technology to farmers and sheep owners by showing them how they might benefit from applying recommended technology.

Towards the end of the opening session the minister distributed merit certificates to 18 Jordanian farmers who have benefited from the Mashreq Project thereby increasing their cereals production.

Taking part in the meeting are delegates representing various Jordanian universities, the Noor-Al Hussein Foundation, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer, along with various members from the private sector.

Jordan and Israel agree

(Continued from page 12)

framework of joint projects discussed within the Jordan Valley Rift Committee," the joint statement said. The "Lowest Park on Earth" project involves developing the Dead Sea area as a tourism destination for all categories of visitors, including those seeking therapeutic treatment, pleasure and sun in addition to those attracted by the cultural and historic sites in the region. The project involves investment of several hundred million dollars, mostly expected from the private sector. The governments of the two countries will only be involved in regulatory capacities as well as extending the related infrastructure.

Mr. Irsheidat said Jordan considered it "as a major peace project that will serve as a model of peace in the area..." Both Mr. Katsav and Mr. Irsheidat agreed that security and stability were inevitable elements in any effort to develop tourism since the entire region has to be seen as a single destination in such efforts.

The joint statement said the two ministers of tourism also noted the "need to promote the creation of combined package tours that will offer Israel and Jordan." At the press conference, a senior official from the Israeli ministry of tourism refused that Israel was giving more focus on itself in the joint tour packages already being marketed abroad. The official displayed advertisements in the U.S. offering "three nights in Israel and three nights in Jordan" as part of the package. Such advertisements, said the official, was a regular feature of the campaign and that the packages were not offering only one or two nights in Jordan as opposed to six or seven in Israel.

Mr. Irsheidat said the joint technical commission, made up of the number two officials from the ministries of tourism of the two countries, would study "further incentives" for tourists to stay longer in Jordan. The commission, whose creation was called for in the tourism agreement between the two countries signed on April 4, 1995, will present recommendations to the ministers of tourism of the two countries. According to officials, the marketing of joint Jordan-Israel tour packages has been a success mainly in the United States but that the campaign needs constant upgrading to cater to the needs of all categories of tourists.

Jordan and Israel also agreed to "activate the establishment and operation" of the Middle East and Mediterranean Tourism Trade Association (MEMTTA), an organisation which was announced at the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit held in Amman late last year. MEMTTA, which includes 11 countries in the region, is headquartered in Tunisia. Jordan and Israel have already ratified the MEMTTA charter. Mr. Katsav expressed hope that other members of the organisation would soon follow suit so that practical implementation of joint projects could be seriously studied.

Mr. Katsav said Jordan and Israel were also studying cooperation with Egypt in the area of tourism involving the Tabu-Bila-Aqaba region and the issue was expected to be one of the key topics for the three countries at the MENA summit to be held in Cairo in November.

Greek Conservatives take thin lead ahead of vote

SALONIKA, Greece (R) — Greece's main opposition Conservatives held a narrow lead over the ruling Socialists just two weeks before national elections, the first major opinion poll of the campaign showed Sunday.

Miltiades Evert's Conservatives had 31 per cent and Prime Minister Costas Simitis' Socialists 30.6 per cent in the nationwide opinion poll by the private MRB group.

Commentators presenting the poll on Mega Television Channel said that if confirmed on election day, the Conservatives would probably be able to form a single-party government. The election law strongly favours the first party past the post.

Mr. Simitis' Socialists were being badly hurt by three left-wing parties which were siphoning off votes. The Dikiki Party, set up by former Socialist Finance Minister Dimitris Tsoulas, took six per cent in the opinion poll.

The Coalition of the Left,

which failed to win a seat in the 300-seat parliament in November 1993, had 4.2 per cent and the Communist Party had 4.9 per cent. A party must win three per cent of the national vote to take a seat in parliament.

Mr. Tsoulas, who once had his political rights suspended by a special criminal court, was confirmed as one of Greece's most popular politicians with 49.4 per cent in the popularity section.

Underlining that Mr. Simitis' problems were more from the left than the right, Coalition of the Left leader Nikos Konstantopoulos headed the personal popularity sweepstakes with 51.9 per cent. Mr. Simitis had 48.9 per cent and Mr. Evert 36.4 per cent.

Mr. Evert's party was hoisted by the poor showing of the nationalist Political Spring Party, which broke away from the Conservatives several years ago and won 10 seats in parliament in the 1993 election. Political Spring, headed

by former Conservative Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras, scored just three per cent in the poll, the minimum for getting a deputy into parliament.

The poll showed voters to be largely disinterested in the election, which Mr. Simitis called a year early to cement his grip on power. More than 50 per cent said they had little or no interest in the Sept. 22 vote.

Mr. Simitis was elected premier by the Socialist parliamentary group in January when the late Socialist Party founder Andreas Papanikolaou resigned in poor health.

He has a flat professorial style and has taken a high-brow stand, arguing that Greece must fight to secure its place as a fully accepted member of the European Union.

Mr. Evert, with a more animated, populist style, has struck to bread and butter issues, pledging more money for farmers and pensioners and telling each district what specific measures

he would take to help them.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Simitis hammered home his message that Greece could no longer afford to dote out favours to special interest groups and must focus on meeting EU economic targets.

"Things will not change with theatrics," Mr. Simitis told a news conference. "We are not here to impress voters... but to lay out our plans for a stronger Greece with an equal place in the EU."

He pledged an all-out attack on Greece's booming black economy, estimated at one third of the country's GDP and to restructure the public sector where hiring would be limited.

Evert has had stiff opposition from within his Conservative party since taking over as leader in 1993 but the poll is likely to lift Conservative hopes of returning to power in the closing weeks of the campaign.

Cambodian army, Khmer Rouge renegades recapture village

PHNOM MALAI, Cambodia (AFP) — A joint force of Cambodian troops and fighters from a renegade faction of the Khmer Rouge has retaken a village overrun by hardline guerrillas last week, officials said Monday.

Chup Koki, a remote village in northwest Cambodia on the Thai frontier which was captured from the renegade faction Wednesday, was retaken Sunday afternoon, Cambodian Deputy Chief of Staff Nhek Bunchay told AFP.

"We recaptured the base from the hardliners yesterday at 5:00 p.m.," Mr. Nhek Bunchay said. He added that casualty figures were as yet unavailable, but that it appeared as if losses had been slight on the government side.

"The situation is now becoming normal, and we are going to improve security in that area," he said.

Last week's fighting, the first major clash reported since a Khmer Rouge split in mid-August, sent some 1,000 Cambodian villagers fleeing towards Thailand, after some 200 hardline guerrillas attacked Chup Koki.

The village was apparently held by elements of Khmer Rouge Division 519 loyal to Ieng Sary, the former deputy prime minister and foreign minister in the Khmer Rouge government which ruled Cambodia for four years in the 1970s.

Meanwhile an unrepentant Ieng Sary, the head of a breakaway Khmer Rouge faction, Monday denied any role in Khmer Rouge genocide and said he expected an amnesty to allow his faction to join forces with Phnom Penh.

Speaking to reporters especially ferried in by helicopter to his faction's jungle base at Phnom Malai, Mr. Ieng Sary said: "I believe that when the government

and our movement join each other, the war will be over."

Senior Phnom Penh officials present in Phnom Malai said the amnesty was likely to be proclaimed soon, possibly within a few days. A ceasefire and tentative peace accord have already been reached.

A full, formal peace settlement or reconciliation is not possible until amnesty is granted, Mr. Ieng Sary stressed, adding: "I know my case will be solved because everyone wants peace."

Mr. Ieng Sary said that Khmer Rouge hardliners were being marginalised as the breakaway movement was "spreading all around the country... It is a historical movement that no one can stop."

He said he had no information on hardline leaders such as Pol Pot and Ta Mok but believed they were based in the Anlong Veng area of northern Cambodia.

Ieng Sary, among senior rebel leaders sentenced to death in absentia for the four-year Khmer Rouge reign in Phnom Penh from 1975, when some two million Cambodians were believed to have died, claimed to have saved people from arbitrary execution.

"I have no regret because of the fact that I had nothing to do with ordering the execution of anyone or even the suggestion of it. When I saw some decisions about executions, I defended people and that's why they survived till now," he said.

Security was tight at Phnom Malai, and reporters were searched twice before being allowed to enter the open-air building where the news conference took place. A large number of heavily-armed bodyguards stood on alert.

Mr. Ieng Sary, 67-year-old former deputy premier and foreign minister in the Khmer Rouge regime,

maintained he had "always advocated a moderate line," which resulted in his being cut out of the rebels' central leadership after 1975.

"Under the pretext of (my) frequent absences from Cambodia, Pol Pot gradually excluded me from the decision-making," Mr. Ieng Sary said, contradicting information that he was "brother number two" in the hierarchy to Pol Pot.

Describing himself as enamoured with democracy from his student days in Paris, he said that "like a patriot" he had to defend his country after Vietnamese troops invaded and ousted the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979.

He had continued with the Khmer Rouge through to 1990 "because I wanted to preserve unity and thought I could still present my opinions," he said.

Mr. Ieng Sary produced a nine-page document, in English, entitled "The true facts about Pol Pot's dictatorial regime, published on Sept. 8, 1996, by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Democratic National United Movement," his newly-formed political organisation.

The Khmer Rouge renegades are understood to want to retain control of the Malai-Pailin region after a peace agreement while the government wants it to come under Phnom Penh's administration.

Malai, Pailin and other areas controlled by breakaway commanders are currently considered liberated zones and not yet under government control.

Also Monday, Mr. Ieng Sary handed over the remains of German Manhias Wolf to a representative from the Order of Malta's Bangkok mission, witnesses said.

Mr. Ieng Sary said the 32-year-old Wolf was executed and his remains burnt after he crossed into the mountainous Phnom Malai area from Thailand. Wolf disappeared in December 1994.

The remains of the young German were handed over in a plastic bag to Jacques Bekaert and Ieng Sary told reporters Wolf had been killed in the Veal Veng area on the orders of hardline Khmer Rouge Defence Chief Son Sen.

The breakaway faction leader said Wolf was shot by his captors on Dec. 16, 1994 and petrol was poured over his body and set alight. "It was very savage," said Ieng Sary, who said nobody would have dared kill foreign hostages of the Khmer Rouge without orders from Pol Pot.

Wolf, then 32, was last seen in the Thai border village of Ban Laem on Dec. 8, 1994, before he crossed into the Phnom Malai area on his motorcycle.

Rebel leaders due to appear in Grozny

MOSCOW (R) — Top separatist rebels are due to appear openly in the Chechen capital Grozny Tuesday for the first time since the city was seized by Russian troops in February 1995, Interfax News Agency said Monday.

It said separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov and other top rebels would take part in a congress of Chechen political groups in Grozny, which Russian troops and rebel forces have left under a peace deal.

Interfax did not specify which of Chechenya's political parties, some of which have cooperated with the Russians while others have opposed them during 21 months of fighting, would attend the congress.

The agency quoted a senior rebel source as saying the congress would discuss how to create a coalition government which could be formed in the southern region this autumn.

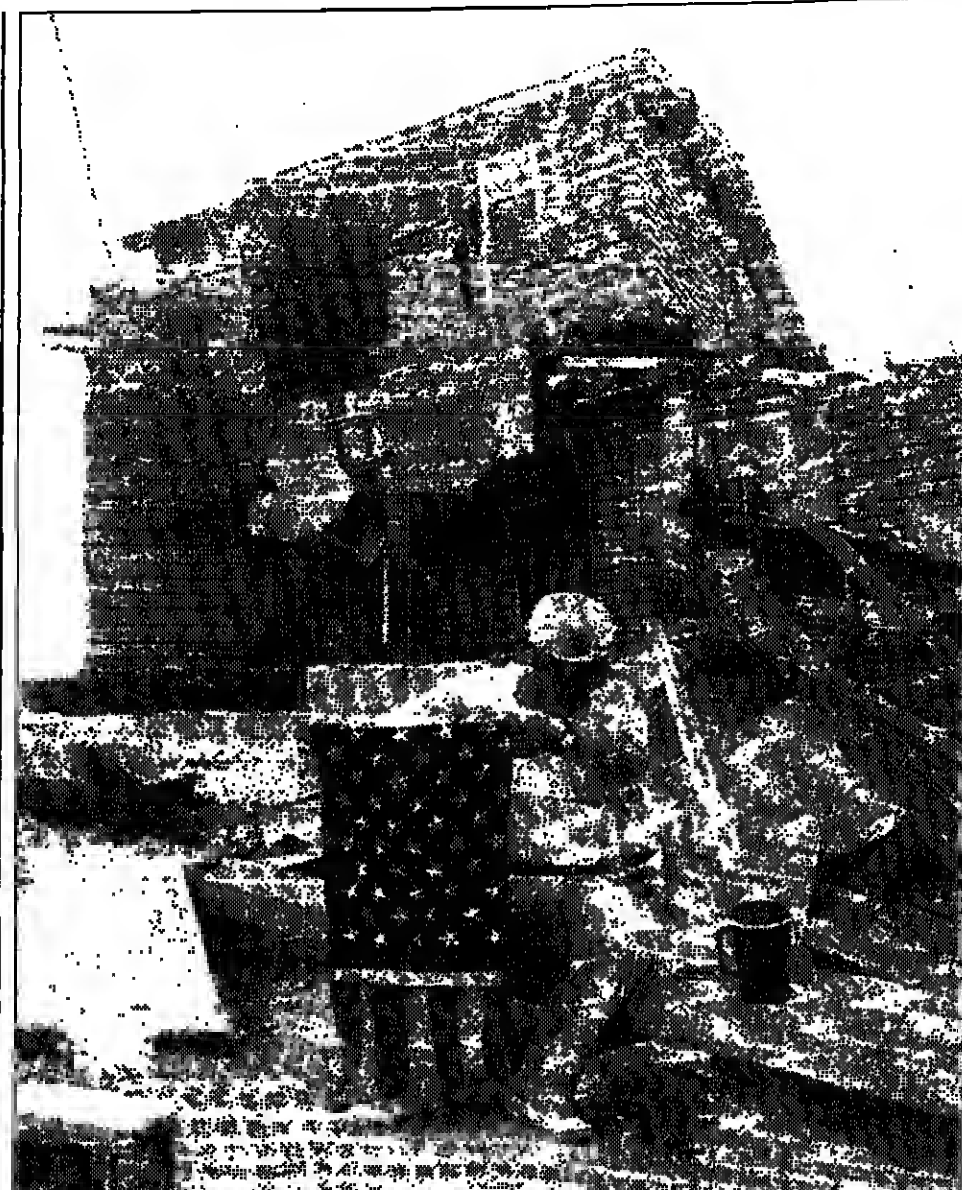
Moscow's envoy to Chechenya, Alexander Lebed, has struck a peace deal with Commander Maskhadov to end fighting which has killed tens of thousands of people and defer by five years a decision on the most sensitive issue, the region's future political status.

Russia sent troops in December 1994 to quell Chechenya's independence revolt. But its forces have suffered a series of humiliating defeats and have failed to establish control over the whole of Chechenya.

The deal between Gen. Lebed and Commander Maskhadov, which had been conditionally backed by President Boris Yeltsin, also provides for a Russian troop withdrawal from the rebel region.

The separatists say they would be ready to allow all major Chechen groups to be in the government, including members of the pro-Moscow administration headed by Doku Zavgayev.

Interfax quoted Ruslan Kutayev, a leading participant of the Grozny conference, as saying the rebels had reserved up to 10 seats in the government for other parties.



A man folds up the American flag found among the debris of his son's home as Surf City residents continued to return to their homes following hurricane Fran. Authorities allowed residents and business owners access onto the Barrier Island on the southern North Carolina coast, among the areas hardest hit by the hurricane (Reuters photo)

N. Carolina picks up pieces from hurricane

WILMINGTON, N.C. (R) — North Carolina residents began returning to soaked and battered homes Sunday to face a huge clearing-up job after hurricane Fran.

Dozens lined up at hardware stores to buy chainsaws and other repair tools. Others whose homes were destroyed sought food at church-run kitchens.

Convoys of trucks streamed into the Wilmington area to fix utility poles, replace hundreds of kilometres of downed power lines, repair roads and haul away fallen trees and debris.

Washington D.C. was bracing itself for the fall-out from Fran as rising floodwaters along the Potomac River threatened the nation's capital Sunday.

After Fran dumped four inches (10 cm) of rain in the capital and up to 14 inches (35 cm) in outlying areas, forecasters predicted a flood surge of 13 to 15 feet (4-4.5 metres) in the wealthy Georgetown section of the city and up to 34 feet (10 metres) at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

Rising flood waters also threatened to close the main road to national airport, the city's domestic airport.

Hurricane Fran cut a swathe of destruction from the southeastern end of North Carolina on Cape Fear, where it came ashore, to the northwest of the state.

At least 15 people were killed in the state, including a firefighter, and there may be more," said Sara Kempin, a spokeswoman for North Carolina Emergency Management Centre.

Some drowned, others were killed when trees fell on their cars or houses, she added.

Local authorities said they were beginning to allow residents to return to Carolina Beach and Kure Beach, two seaside towns on Pleasure Island off Wilmington. They had been barred since Thursday because electric, water and sewer services were severed and many properties were still extremely unsafe, said officials.

A 24-hour curfew was in effect for both towns and a 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew was imposed on the rest of New Hanover County. Authorities said schools would remain closed Monday while damage was assessed.

In Wrightsville Beach, a town on a Barrier Island off Wilmington, officials said it would be at least three days before residents could return because of safety concerns.

On Topsail Island, north of Wilmington, rescue workers searched homes in north topsail beach for missing people.

"We're going house to house on the beach looking

for people who might have been trapped. We're finding people — they're scared. They were freaked out by the storm," said Marian Kleinman, a spokeswoman for Onslow County.

An elderly woman who was found floating on a mattress in a marsh near Surf City after the storm was in critical condition, reports said. Her trailer home was destroyed.

As National Guard troops patrolled the islands, bulldozers scraped sand from beach and roads. Diggers scooped chunks of crumpled houses and slabs of broken asphalt out of the way.

"Major roads have been cleared. Almost all the county and city roads are open," said Bruce Shell, spokesman for Wilmington's New Hanover County.

As many as 400,000 people remained without electricity and trailer loads of generators sold out in minutes.

The Wilmington City Council passed an emergency ordinance Saturday to prevent price gouging, making it punishable by a \$500 fine or 30 days in jail.

Wilson's Outdoor Equipment in Raleigh, where lines snaked around the corner store, had sold more than 400 chainsaws.

Hurricane won't spoil surf city wedding

SURF CITY (R) — Andrea Blake and Josh Waring are getting married, come hell or high water. The high water came late Thursday with hurricane Fran's unexpected visit — a tremendous wall of seawater that flowed into their new beach house apartment in Surf City on Topsail Island, a North Carolina barrier island ravaged by the storm's 120 mph (193 kph) winds. With their wedding scheduled for next Saturday, Blake, 26, and Waring, 22, had begun moving into their new house just two days before Fran struck. Some of their furniture was still in the removal truck outside the door. While the floodwater damaged the house, it threatened neither their lives nor their marriage plans. "We're the hurricane couple. We're going through with it," said Blake. "We're very lucky."

Harriet's school choice a harsh lesson for U.K.'s Blair

LONDON (R) — British opposition Labour Party leader Tony Blair said in a published interview that failing to predict the future that ensued from the decision of his shadow cabinet colleague Harriet Harman to send her son to a grammar (selective) school was his biggest error since taking over as Labour leader in 1994. Ms. Harman chose to send the younger of her two sons to a grammar school, rather than follow the party line and send him to a comprehensive (non-selective) school. Mr. Blair said: "I was too slow to recognise what would happen after Harriet Harman's decision on the school. I regarded it as a straightforward private matter, and I felt that was very important. I thought the reaction was way over the top, but I should have gone public more quickly and explained it."

Mao's ghost stalks the library and the dining room

BEIJING (R) — China's breakneck development and a vigorous new consumer culture may have steamrollered Mao Tse-tong's political and economic legacy, but at least the library of the late revolutionary leader is in safe hands. China's diligent archivists — part of an intellectual class once revered by Maoist cultural commissars — have gathered 90,000 books kept by the "great helmsman," along with 30,000 of his papers and documents, for posterity. Manuscripts are not the only Mao mementos still enthusiastically collected. Two decades after his death, theme restaurants serving Mao's favourite dishes pull in crowds of diners and a popular appetite for Mao-associated retro-kitsch has spawned a small private sector industry that would have infuriated the devout Marxist.

Russians, Chechen rebels take to the playing field

MOSCOW (R) — Russian soldiers beat Chechen rebels 3-1 Sunday in an unprecedented soccer match in the regional capital Grozny where fragile peace is holding after the withdrawal of troops and separatist forces. ITAR-TASS news agency said the pitch in Grozny, where the match between the St. Petersburg Omon crack police squad and rebels of Field Commander Arbi Kurbanov took place, had first to be cleared of mines left by recent fierce fighting in the city. TASS said the Omon servicemen and rebels, who fought each other in Grozny throughout 21 months of war, now formed a single group patrolling the city's Novopromyslovsky district.



Leader of dissident Khmer Rouge guerrillas group Ieng Sary speaks during a news conference at his Phnom Malai jungle base Monday. Ieng Sary said he had negotiated a ceasefire with the Cambodia government, but more time and talks were needed for a comprehensive settlement (Reuters photo)

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U.S. President Bill Clinton, surrounded by Secret Service agents, goes jogging in Washington. President Clinton has called on the U.S. Senate to ratify a global chemical weapons ban treaty that he said would keep poison gas out of the hands of "rogue states" (Reuter photo)

Clinton, Dole rest ahead of hard campaigning

WASHINGTON (R) — Democrat Bill Clinton and Republican Bob Dole each took a day off Sunday to rest up for a week that will take them campaigning across the country.

President Clinton jogged through Washington's Rock Creek Park, played golf and went to church on one of his rare days at the White House this month, when he is expected to spend two out of every three days on the campaign trail.

After meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Irish Premier John Bruton Monday, Mr. Clinton was scheduled to set off Tuesday on a three-day trip to Missouri, Colorado, Arizona and California, returning early Friday morning.

Clinton by more than 15 points in opinion polls, also spent Sunday in Washington, attending church in the morning and then dropping by his campaign headquarters.

He also has a busy week ahead of him.

The Republican was scheduled to take a turn in the South Monday and Tuesday, visiting Georgia, Florida, Louisiana and Tennessee.

On Wednesday, he was expected to travel to Connecticut and Delaware and at the end of the week to visit several states in the Midwest, where U.S. elections are typically won or lost.

With less than two months left until the Nov. 5 election, both candidates are running as hard as they can.

Sen. Dole appeared to be seeking to shore up his base in the south, while also reaching out to the Midwest, where he spent four days last week.

Most surveys put Mr. Dole solidly behind the president, with the latest CNN/USA Today/Gallup tracking poll, released Saturday, giving Mr. Clinton 53 per cent, Sen. Dole 36 per cent and Reform Party candidate Ross Perot 5 per cent.

Even in the south, traditionally a Republican stronghold, Sen. Dole appears to have an uphill climb.

A Texas poll published by the Houston Chronicle Sunday showed Sen. Dole beating Mr. Clinton by narrow margins in the state, with Mr.

Perot at 4 per cent. Taken Sept. 2-5, the poll has a 3.5 percentage point margin of error.

Mr. Clinton has been putting pressure on Sen. Dole in the south, notably in Florida, where the president spent Thursday and Friday of last week.

Mr. Clinton came within a whisker of winning Florida in 1992, losing to former President George Bush by only 100,000 votes.

This week Mr. Clinton was also scheduled to lavish attention on California, which he has visited more than two dozen times since taking office, in an effort to lock up its 54 electoral college votes — 20 per cent of the 270 he needs to win.

Rap star critically wounded in Las Vegas shooting

LAS VEGAS (R) — Rap music star Tupac Shakur was listed in critical condition Sunday after he was shot three times in the chest when the car he was riding in was ambushed and riddled with gunfire, authorities said.

Shakur, a 25-year-old singer-actor with a history of violence and trouble with the law, underwent emergency surgery after the Saturday night attack near the famed Las Vegas strip.

It was the second time in less than two years that Shakur has been shot, and a hospital source said he had a "fairly good" chance of surviving his latest wounds.

Marion "Suge" Knight, 31, co-founder of the controversial music label Death Row Records, was driving the car and suffered a minor gunshot wound to the head, Las Vegas police said.

Knight, who produces the work of Shakur and other top rap stars, was treated and released Sunday.

The attack occurred while Shakur, one of the most notorious performers of hardcore gangsta rap, was headed for a nightclub with friends in a convoy of 10 cars after watching the Mike Tyson-Bruce Seldon heavyweight boxing title fight.

A white Cadillac with four people inside pulled up next to Shakur's black BMW and one of them opened fire, riddling the car with 12 or 13 bullets, police said. Dozens of stunned witnesses looked on in horror, according to broadcast reports.

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E.R., Frasier take top U.S. TV honours

PASADENA, California (R) — E.R. won the battle of the medical shows Sunday winning best drama series while Frasier was named best comedy for the third straight year as the television industry presented its 48th annual Emmy Awards.

Ironically, Pickett Fences, a critically acclaimed show cancelled by CBS after four seasons, picked up two acting awards, for Kathy Baker as best actress in a drama for the third time as small-town Doctor Jill Brock, and Ray Walston as best supporting actor for the second year in a row as Judge Henry Bone.

Dennis Franz, who plays a tough detective in the gritty ABC drama NYPD Blue won best actor for the second time in three years while Helen Hunt, fresh from her success in this summer's blockbuster movie Twister, was named best actress in a comedy for Mad About You after five nominations.

In a surprise, John Lithgow beat veteran comedians Jerry Seinfeld, Paul Reiser, last year's winner Kelsey Grammer

and Garry Shandling to win best comedy actor in his first comedy series, Third Rock From The Sun.

Mr. Lithgow, known more for his serious film and stage acting, had previously won an Emmy as a guest on Amazing Stories in 1986.

It was also a good night for British actors, with Helen Mirren, Alan Rickman and Greta Scacchi all picking up Emmys, while Tyne Daly, best known as one of two female detectives in the ground-breaking police drama Cagney and Lacey, became the most honoured dramatic actress in TV history, winning her Fifth Emmy Award.

In the battle between the networks, NBC emerged as the winner with a total of 20 Emmys, but cable network HBO surprisingly took 14 awards, pushing ABC into third place with 12 Emmys and CBS in fourth with 11.

Daly won the award as best supporting actress in a drama series for her role as Miss Alice in the frontier drama Christy, which aired on CBS.

It was her fifth Emmy in 10 nominations, having previously won in 1983, 1985 and 1988 as best lead actress in Cagney and Lacey. Candice Bergen has also won five Emmys, but they were in the comedy category for Murphy Brown.



Frasier producer Maggie Randall (centre) holds the Emmy Award to her show with co-stars Peri Gilpin (left) and Jane Leeves (right) at a party hosted by the television show Entertainment Tonight in Pasadena, California. Frasier won as Outstanding Comedy Series at the 48th Annual Emmy Awards (Reuter photo)

At the start of the three-hour televised show, Rip Torn and Julia Louis-Dreyfus of Seinfeld received Emmys as best supporting actor and actress in comedies.

Torn, more famous for serious movie roles, plays the producer of a talk show on HBO's The Larry Sanders Show, which satirises television and TV people.

The Emmys, hosted by Reiser, talk-show host Oprah Winfrey and actor Michael J. Fox, had been expected to feature a duel between hospital dramas — E.R. and Chicago Hope for the top honours. But the rivalry was dead on arrival.

NBC's E.R., which takes place in a Chicago emergency room, won only the one Emmy for best drama despite garnering 17 nominations. Its cross-town rival, Chicago Hope, which airs on CBS, was nominated for 15 Emmys but won only two, including one for its director Jeremy Kagan.

George Clooney, who will be the next movie Batman and was nominated as best actor in a drama for his role as a doctor in E.R., went home empty-handed, as did his colleague from the show, Anthony Edwards.

In a strong category, they lost to Franz, who said he had a lot of feedback from viewers who sympathise with his complex character, Andy Sipowicz.

Veteran movie director John Frankenheimer won his third Emmy as best director of a miniseries for the civil war drama Andersonville.

Actress Scacchi was not present to receive her Emmy as best supporting actress in a miniseries, as Alexandra in HBO's Rasputin, but Rickman, who played The Mad Monk in the same production, took the lead from fellow Briton

African countries agree to ease Burundi blockade

NAIROBI (Agencies) — African countries said Monday they agreed to ease sanctions against Burundi to allow in some humanitarian aid on condition it did not undermine the purpose of the embargo.

The regional Sanctions Coordinating Committee said it agreed at its first meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, Friday to allow U.N. flights to Burundi, access by road for staff and agencies to import fuel.

The committee decided to address genuine humanitarian concerns in a manner that does not undermine the very essence of sanctions, it said in a statement issued in Nairobi Monday.

It said it decided to allow U.N. agencies subject to "strict verification and control arrangements" to import baby food and other essential requirements for infants and hospital patients.

It also agreed to allow them to import emergency medical and laboratory supplies and some kerosene to keep vaccines cold.

Burundi's Tutsi military ruler Pierre Buyoya had urged the committee to lift sanctions imposed on Burundi in retaliation to an army coup that ousted President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya on July 25.

But the committee noted that "the Buyoya regime" had so far failed to meet any of the conditions which were set by regional leaders when they decided to impose the sanctions on July 31.

The statement listed the conditions as restoring parliament, unbanning political parties and immediate and unconditional negotiations with all groups within and outside the country.

"The committee therefore decided that the sanctions should be strictly maintained," said the committee, consisting of representatives of Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Zaire, a committee member, did not attend the meeting.

"The committee decided to allow a restricted number of U.N. flights to and from Bujumbura, coordinated by the resident coordinator of the U.N. system in Nairobi and authorised by the Kenya National Sanctions Committee," it said in the statement.

The committee decided emergency flights would be authorised by National Sanctions Committees on a case by case basis.

"For the sole purpose of getting across humanitarian assistance to Burundi, the committee decided to allow restricted road access to and from Burundi for personnel of the U.N. and other humanitarian agencies," it added.

"In order to facilitate the distribution of humanitarian supplies and the essential operations of the U.N. agencies and resident diplomatic corps in Burundi, the committee decided to allow these agencies to import limited controlled

amounts of diesel and petrol for their own use," the statement said.

It also said it would allow U.N. agencies operating in Burundi to import communications equipment for their own use.

Sanctions have hit landlocked Burundi hard, forcing the army-appointed government to ration fuel and increasing prices of even home-grown food because of higher domestic transport costs.

But Maj. Buyoya, a retired army major, has refused to open peace talks with Hutu rebels unless they first lay down their arms.

More than 150,000 people have been killed in Burundi in civil war and massacres since 1993, fuelling fears of bloodshed on a scale similar to neighbouring Rwanda's genocide in 1994.

The committee commended participating countries and the OAU for "solidarity and cohesion" in strictly applying the sanctions and thanked the international community for its support.

The committee will next meet in Kigali, Rwanda, on Oct. 1.

Meanwhile, Burundi's military said Monday that the capital Bujumbura saw a quiet weekend after a big operation by the Tutsi-dominated army to dislodge Hutu rebels from the hills above the city.

"There was nothing to report apart from one or two shots fired by unidentified gunmen in the (northern) Mutanga district Sunday night," army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Nibizi told AFP.

No casualties were reported.

Last week, government troops said they had killed about 100 Hutu rebels and lost three of their own men in a two-day sweep in the hills surrounding the capital.

The army launched the offensive after the guerrillas lobbed three mortar shells into the Mutanga district Tuesday, including one which landed in the university campus, but the military said nobody was hurt.

Hutu gunmen also put on a display of automatic rifle firepower in the hills in what a rebel spokesman said was a warning that they could attack Bujumbura any time they wanted.

The rebels later claimed that those killed by the army last week were mainly civilians slaughtered in massacres.

The rebels have sabotaged electricity lines leading to the capital, depriving it of two-thirds of its power, and prices have sky-rocketed as the result of the month-long economic blockade by neighbouring countries.

The rebels are seeking to dissuade Hutu farmers from taking their produce into Bujumbura, and around 1,000 farmers abandoned their smallholdings around the capital last week to take refuge in overcrowded displaced persons' camps on the outskirts.

Thousands of rebels vote in Philippine polls

COTABATO, Philippines (R) — Thousands of Muslim guerrillas laid down their weapons Monday and voted to elect their chief, Nur Misuari, as regional governor of a semi-autonomous region in the southern Philippines.

Mr. Misuari, a former university professor who plunged the Mindanao region into 24 years of bloody civil war, cast his vote in a school house in his home town in Jolo and said it signalled the rebels' return to the political mainstream.

"This vote symbolises our commitment to peace, democracy and progress for our people here in Mindanao and eventually for the entire country," he said.

The chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) signed a peace deal with the government last week, ending a separatist war that killed more than 120,000 people.

Running unopposed, he needs one vote — his or that of one of his two wives — to win the governorship of a semi-autonomous region comprising four Muslim provinces. The area is considered to be among the poorest in the country.

Mr. Misuari is expected to be proclaimed the winner Wednesday after the official count, the Election Commission said.

More than 2,000 rebels, many of them wearing battle fatigues and without their guns, voted in Maguindanao province in the first hours of polling. Thousands more cast their votes in the other areas, officials said.

"We did not bring our firearms because we are under the peace process," said MNLF District Commander Basir Naim, one of more than 500 guerrillas who voted in Sagayuran town.

Voting around the region was peaceful, police said.

But official poll watchers reported cases of cheating in some areas in Lanao Del Sur, where two or three people, some of them rebels, voted for an entire district.

President Fidel Ramos said he expected Mindanao's economy to now take off.

"The era of peace that Mindanao will now enjoy offers a unique opportunity for the region... to emerge from the economic backwaters to the front door of progress," Mr. Ramos said in Manila.

Also at stake in the polls are the post of vice governor and all the seats of a regional legislative assembly.



Actor Alan Rickman holds the Emmy Award he won for Lead Actor in for the miniseries Rasputin on Sept. 8 at the 48th Annual Emmy Awards in Pasadena, California (Reuter photo)

Mirren, to say he was "dead chuffed, too."

Mirren, who was named best lead actress in a miniseries for playing detective superintendent Jane Tennison on PBS' Prime Suspect: Scent of Darkness, had confused the audience by using the same northern English colloquialism.

"It means 'I'm very pleased' in American," she said.

Singer Tony Bennett won his first Emmy for best performance in a variety show.

NBC's Gulliver's Travels, starring Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen, took five Emmys including best miniseries, while the cult space alien show The X-Files also won five awards, including the Emmy for best writing for a drama series.

HBO's Truman, starring Gary Sinise as the U.S. president who ordered the atomic bomb dropped on Japan, was named best movie made-for-television.

This year's 48th annual awards ceremony was broadcast to 85 countries and an estimated foreign audience of 600 million.

Moscow car-bomb injures 2

MOSCOW (AFP) — Moscow police searched for clues Monday after at least two people were injured in a car-bomb blast at a busy shopping complex, in what may have been a mafia attack.

The head of the Samokhod car dealership, Igor Shitikov, 31, was wounded in the back in the incident Sunday after a bomb exploded under his luxury Mercedes 320 at the All-Russian Exhibition Centre, city police told AFP.

Another man, aged 27, was lightly injured, police said, adding it was not yet clear whether he was connected to Mr. Shitikov, or just a passer by.

"We are still investigating, but we cannot rule out that it was connected to an organised crime dispute," the policeman said.

Earlier, Interfax News Agency said that a third person was wounded, but police said they were not aware of this.

Small blasts, about the size of Sunday's car bomb, are a regular occurrence in Moscow. They are rarely solved, but are often blamed either on Chechen separatists, the Moscow mafia, or other criminal score settling.

Police said the blast, at 2300 hours (1900 GMT), was the equivalent of 200 grammes of explosives and did not contain shrapnel.

A second Mercedes parked near the scene was checked by sniffer dogs, but found to contain no bomb.

There were no immediate clues as to who was behind the explosion and the investigation was continuing Monday.

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Editorial and advertising offices:

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Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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Place for legitimacy and restraint

TURKEY'S DECISION to establish a security buffer zone within Iraq's territory has understandably been met with widespread opposition from major capitals of the world, Russia, France and the European Union, to name but a few, have expressed astonishment at Ankara's determination to exploit the vulnerability of Iraq by moving its army into that country's northern territory on the pretext that such deployment is necessary to deter anti-Turkish infiltration by the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). Cairo, Damascus and the Arab Gulf states also came out strongly against the Turkish move.

The demerit of the Ankara excuse was amply rebutted by Baghdad when Hamed Youssef Hammadi, head of the Cultural and Information Committee of Iraq's National Assembly, told reporters on Sunday that "if Turkey feels that it has to protect itself, it should have that buffer zone in its territory." Hammadi said it all when he challenged Ankara to solve its border problems from within its own territory rather than encroach on the lands of neighbouring countries, especially when they appear to be weak and vulnerable for it is equally obvious that in voicing strong criticism of Turkey's attempt to encroach on Iraq's territorial integrity, the other capitals of the world are clearly concerned about establishing any new precedents that would jeopardise the long-standing principle in international law about the inviolability of state borders.

The timing of Turkey's move is also ominous. At a time when there is civil strife in northern Iraq, as two major Iraqi Kurdish factions have been fighting one another for some time now, any "interference" by Ankara in that area would only add fuel to the fire already raging there. The PKK problem is not new and has been a major Turkish preoccupation for a number of years already. Why now, especially in the aftermath of Washington's missile attacks against Iraq, does Turkey wish to introduce new elements of uncertainty and tension with an unfeeling Arab country with which it purports to have strategic relations? Just what is the purpose for the escalation? There are many difficult questions to be raised about the timing and legitimacy of the Turkish decision indeed.

Ankara should reconsider its move in order to maintain friendly and constructive relations with the Arab World. Above all, Turkey, which religiously protects its frontiers from any violations coming from Greece, should be the first to comprehend the importance of the sanctity of recognised borders. Baghdad has pledged to take whatever action necessary to frustrate Turkey's declared decision to move its troops beyond Iraq's northern borders with Turkey. But the brewing crisis should be resolved by peaceful means and by diplomatic initiatives emanating from within the region as well as by the major capitals of the world. The Middle East has enough conflicts as it is and no country should be afforded the chance to complicate and inflame the situation further. We trust that after due consideration, the Turkish government would find it more sensible to protect its security through legitimate ways and means rather than repudiate long-standing norms in international relations.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

TURKEY'S ANNOUNCED plans to create a security zone along its borders with Iraq inside Iraqi territory came under fire from Bassam Emoush, a writer for Al Ra'i daily Monday. The idea, which is mainly advocated by Turkey's Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller and the military, is part and parcel of the American plots against Iraq and the Arab and Islamic countries, said the writer who is also member of the Islamic Action Front party in parliament. Stressing that Turkey's security cannot be ensured at the expense of Iraq, the writer said that the idea of security zone would not help Turkey protect itself from the Kurdish rebels who seek their rights and freedom but would only help increase American domination of Turkish policies and its hegemony over the Middle East. The Arab countries, which have declared their opposition to the Turkish plans had earlier blessed steps taken by Ankara to enhance relations with other Islamic countries, include trade deals agreed with Iran and the recent overtures to build closer ties with Baghdad, but such plot concocted with the United States at the expense of Iraqi territory is totally unacceptable, especially as it is engineered under a government led by Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan of the Islamic Welfare Party, continued the writer.

A WRITER FOR Al Dustour Monday called on the Arab countries still aligned behind the U.S.-British coalition against Iraq to promptly sever their links with these powers that aim at protecting their interests at the expense of the Arab Nation. The U.S., Britain and Israel are the only parties benefiting from this coalition which does not hide its objectives of destroying Iraq, starving its people and maintaining American hegemony over the Arab region through acts of intimidation, said Taher Al Adwan. Arabs allied with the U.S., Britain and Israel are gaining nothing except seeing their Iraqi kinsmen starving and their country exposed to fragmentation, continued the writer. This coalition has transformed the Arab countries into a training ground for the U.S. marines, enabled America to use Arab lands as a platform to test its most sophisticated strategic weapons on Iraq, failed to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict and consolidated Israel's hold on the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon according to the writer. Above all, he said, this coalition helped the U.S. and Britain to continuously plunder Arab countries oil wealth and drain their resources through arranging to sell these countries outdated weapons that can by no means shield the Arab Nation from any external aggression.

The View from Fourth Circle

The U.S., Iraq, historical ghosts, and quality baloney

By Rami G. Khouri

Along with the high-tech missiles that it launched against Iraq last week, the United States also subjected the world to an equally intense assault of old-fashioned lies, self-serving baloney, and transparent nonsense that are as counter-productive as they are laughable. Rarely in modern or ancient history have we witnessed such an epic combination of violence, arrogance, vindictiveness and intemperance as we witnessed last week in the American actions against Iraq.

The oddball explanations we heard from an otherwise impressive and distinguished array of American officials are patently unconvincing. Most offensive of all, perhaps, is the attempt by some Americans to brand you as pro-Iraq ("pro-Saddam", in their words) if you criticise U.S. policy. I am not a fan of the Iraqi regime and would be very happy to see it change for something more humane and democratic, but I do not support such change happening at the hands of foreign intervention.

As far as I could tell from media reports and reading U.S. government official transcripts, the following reasons compelled the US to attack Iraq last week:

1. To ensure the security of oil supplies in the region. In fact, the American attacks probably made oil supplies less, not more secure. a) They nipped in the bud the implementation of the agreement by which Iraq would have sold some 700,000 barrels of oil per day, which would have increased oil supplies and security and probably also lowered prices. b) The American attacks have made it more likely that fighting will expand in the Kurdish regions and very likely will bring in Turkey and perhaps Iran, thereby increasing threats to the Iraqi oil pipeline to Turkey. c) There was no obvious threat to oil supplies to the world from the southern Iraq/northern Gulf region, unless the U.S. knew of threats that nobody else recognised.

2. To implement UN Security Council resolution 688: a) The U.S. interpretation of resolution 688 is a unilateral hijacking of the U.N. system that few other countries in the world agree with. Nowhere does resolution 688 call for the use of military power to enforce it, and nowhere in the U.N. system does it state that the U.S. can single-handedly decide if, when, and how to implement U.N. resolutions. b) If the implementation of U.N. resolutions is so important to orderly human civilisation, why does the U.S. persistently refuse to act with equal vigour to implement equally valid U.N. resolutions that call for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from South Lebanon, or other U.N. resolutions that require Israel to stop its aggressive behaviour against Arabs?

3. The U.S. will protect its friends and allies and innocent civilians against the use of brutal force by the Iraqi government. a) If the U.S. is against governments using undue force against their own people, then why is the U.S. government not attacking Russia for its war in Chechnya or the governments of Tajikistan or Myanmar for their brutality to their own people? If human suffering is so troubling to the U.S. government, why does it do nothing about the destruction of some 2,500 Kurdish villages in Turkey or the stream of millions of refugees from southeast Turkey? We are tempted to conclude that the U.S. position is not against brutality and human suffering per se, but only against brutality and human suffering in carefully selected situations that coincide with American imperial interests.

4. "Someone has to protect the Iraqi Kurds and in this case the United States has taken it upon itself to act — in our own interest — to do so." — U.S. State Department spokesman Nick Burns, September 3. If it was in the U.S. interest to protect Iraqi Kurds when the Iraqi government was killing them last week, why is it not in the U.S. interest to protect Iraqi Kurds this week when they are being killed by other Iraqi Kurds? Does the U.S. national interest have a very short shelf life of less than five days in situations like this? Or do we conclude that killing Kurds is not itself the problem for the U.S., but rather who does the killing? This is therefore not a political problem, but a more profound moral dilemma for the people of the United States that they might wish to ponder in between Pentagon briefings.

5. The extension of the no-fly zone in the south of Iraq was necessary to safeguard the stability and security of the region and to prevent Iraq from considering new adventures against its neighbours. "This has changed the strategic situation, particularly in the southern part of Iraq. Saddam...is strategically worse off than he was before these strikes began." — President Bill Clinton, Sept. 4 remarks in the Oval Office. a) This is high quality baloney masquerading as rationality. Iraqi planes were not flying in the south and threatened nobody, given the overwhelming power of U.S. forces in the Gulf region. Iraq was and is not in any position to threaten anyone in the south, and to claim otherwise is to engage in the politics of innocent hallucination, malicious imperialism, or squalid deceit. b) If the strategic situation has changed, it has changed for the worse for the United States, given the increased tension in the region, the expanding violence and entry of new foreign forces in northern Iraq, the rising anti-American sentiment throughout the region, and the increasingly uncomfortable situation of Middle Eastern governments that genuinely desire to promote good, close relations with the U.S. c) The continuing containment and humiliation of Iraq are likely to strengthen Iran's position, give it new linkages with Kurds inside Iraq, and possibly boost pro-Iranian Islamist political movements throughout the region — all of which are contrary to U.S. strategic interests and worsen America's strategic situation in the Mideast. d) One could argue that Saudi Arabia is a greater threat to the U.S. than Iraq, because many more Americans have been killed by Saudis than by Iraqis in the last year; such anti-Americanism is fostered and fuelled by American policies such as those we witnessed last week.

6. "This was an action that I thought we had to take, it was a measured, strong, appropriate action...We are prepared to change the strategic realities that Saddam Hussein faces if he violates the U.N. prohibitions on either threatening his neighbours or repressing his own people." — Bill Clinton, Sept. 4 remarks in the Oval Office. Wrong again, Bill. The American action was intemperate, disproportionate, vindictive, ineffective, probably counter-productive, and wildly incoherent and contradictory in terms of its intended impact vs its actual consequences. It certainly has changed strategic realities, but in a manner that burns rather than promotes U.S. interests. Leaderships and regimes such as those of Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and others in the Mideast will find themselves caught in an increasingly uncomfortable and untenable contradiction between their need for American friendship and support

and their people's rising anger against American double standards and diplomatic vulgarity in the region. A key lesson being learned anew by many in this region is that the narrow interests of imperial powers will always override the interests of local friends, partners and surrogates. The United States is acting in almost total disregard of the interests of its friends in this region, the medium-term stability of the Middle East and its peoples, the integrity of the U.N. system, and the fundamental moral foundations of international law and the modern world system based on states and their sovereignty.

The impact of Arab anger is hard to gauge or predict. Clearly, many Arabs this week are quietly assessing the cumulative meaning of the United States' positions during the Israeli attacks in Lebanon this spring, on the Arab-Israeli peace process, and on the situation in Iraq. Most will conclude — again — that the United States is only interested in expanding its own and Israel's hegemony throughout the Middle East, and that Arab, Kurdish or other local interests have neither importance nor even validity. There will be long-term consequences to such embittered local linkages between recurring episodes that find Arabs and other Middle Easterners at the receiving end of American military, moral and diplomatic violence.

Today, we can already identify growing scepticism with the Arab-Israeli peace process, for example, as one consequence of anti-American sentiment. Other consequences will assert themselves in forms that we cannot predict now. But Americans should remember: Just as they sought to cleanse themselves from the shame and ghosts of Vietnam some three decades after the fact, so will human beings in the Middle East seek to rid themselves one day of the consequences of the steady stream of arrogance, violence, humiliation and dehumanisation that have been the hallmark of many American actions in this region in recent years. The bombings of Americans in Saudi Arabia may be a sign of this process at work.

An important question remains unanswered: Why is the United States acting with such sustained violence and retribution against Iraq, which is contained, weakened and wallowing in the widespread misery and poverty of its people? Why is the United States government acting so, well, so un-American? Americans individually do not display the sort of frenzied lust for blood, suffering and vindictive dehumanisation and demonisation that their government is inflicting upon the people, land, sovereignty, wealth and government of Iraq. All of the reasons given by the U.S. government for its policy in Iraq suffer grave untruths or inconsistencies. The ferocity displayed by Washington must be explained by something other than the fatuous absurdities and embarrassing mumbo jumbo that we have heard from many American officials.

Now that the longevity, whimsy and indiscriminatory intensity of American violence against Iraq are more evident, the court of world public opinion should judge the actions of both Iraq and the U.S. The Chinese were right when they said during the Gulf war that this is a problem of a big hegemonist (the U.S.) vs a small hegemonist (Iraq).

America vanquished its Vietnam syndrome in the Gulf war of 1991. What painful memory is Washington exorcising now — the Alamo?

Hitting Iraq doesn't help anything but America's ego

By Flora Lewis

PARIS — This is not just another action movie — bad guy oversteps, good guys pay him off. The reticence of most allies who took part in the Gulf war coalition in response to American strikes on Iraq reflects awareness that the attacks don't resolve anything.

All the devilish complexities of the regional situation remain, highlighting the fact that there is no coherent strategy for dealing with them — not only no joint approach, surrounding diverse interests, but no American policy beyond the display of force.

Nobody sympathises with Saddam Hussein, not even the French, who are pleased to have another occasion to show their vaunted "difference."

That is why, whatever the reservations and disapproval, there has been no open denunciation of what has been clearly labelled America's "unilateral" decision. There is no wish to comfort Saddam, or to embolden him to feel that he can escape retribution.

And there are sharply diverse interests. France, whose President Jacques Chirac launched a programme of arming Iraq when he was prime minister in the late 1970s, would like to retain what it considered its "privileged" commercial position.

Turkey, which has suffered big economic losses from the embargo since the Gulf war, feels that it has lost a second time, now that the partial lifting under the United Nations oil-for-food agreement, which would have assured reopening the pipeline across its territory, is indefinitely postponed.

The Arab states, always worried about popular reaction when another Arab land

is hit by Western power, can expect an anti-Western backlash from their publics, already distressed at the intense suffering of the Iraqi people under the embargo. It is Saddam's fault, but they don't think that his people should be punished in his place.

While there is understanding that a big power must not show weak irresolution at an affront, the overwhelming conviction outside the United States is that the interest which Bill Clinton defended by attacking was more electoral than national.

The American argument for "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran has turned into a trap, thanks to the intrigues and mutual perfidy of Kurdish faction leaders. Critics of the policy thought it would push the neighbouring enemies to mutual support as outcasts against the West. Instead it has caught the United States between the two, hurting one side risks helping the other, so long as the Kurdish factions continue the old game of looking to "the enemy of my enemy as my friend."

The United States sponsored a Kurdish coalition agreement at a meeting in Ireland, but it soon broke down. Both Iran and Iraq were invited by Kurds to intervene again on opposing sides, since neither faction felt that it could rely on U.S. help against its rival. Inevitably, the Kurds who think they are manipulating Baghdad or Tehran have again become pawns of the two states.

That is an important reason why the United States chose installations in the south of Iraq as targets although it is in the north, where the pipeline runs, that Saddam's agents have reestablished control.

The policy dilemma for the United States is severely

complicated by the disruptive positions of Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Until he took power there was at least the prospect of Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement broadening into wide regional economic cooperation that would contribute to stability, bring reconciliation and isolate the regimes of both Iran and Iraq. That could provide the fundamentals for an overarching strategy.

That hope is receding. Mr. Netanyahu doesn't seem to have any regional policy, although he professes to respect the agreements signed by his predecessors. He is undermining the "peace process" step by step, and in the eyes of friendly Arab leaders the United States is to be blamed because of its apparently unconditional support for Israel.

The result is that, as in the much narrower dispute among Kurds, for the United States having to choose sides means losing something vital.

Nor is overthrowing Saddam a serious policy. If it could be done, it does not assure any improvement except perhaps for the Iraqis themselves. So far Saddam has been remarkably lucky, and that luck can't hold forever.

"Sending a message" to Saddam was a tactical move, perhaps unavoidable in the combination of political and geopolitical circumstances. But the need is urgent for a longer, better conceived strategy, and the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations must be an essential element.

Washington is tempted to reduce all this to simple good guy-bad guy rhetoric. But it's not the real world, which is why America's partners are so reluctant to sign on — Herald Tribune.

The mess in the Mideast is bigger than Iraq

By Thomas L. Friedman

TEHRAN — You couldn't see or hear the cruise missiles smashing into Iraq from here in downtown Tehran, but you sure could feel the political fallout raining down on the region.

It was both strange and fascinating to be sitting with Iranians at the Guidance Ministry and watching the reports of the U.S. bombing on one of the few television sets around town that (legally) gets CNN. What was so striking was how confused the Iranians were in their initial reactions.

From some there was pity for the Muslim Iraqi people, or as a secretary said to me: "Saddam is a mouse. Why do you bother with him?" From Iranian state radio came a remarkable commentary scolding America for not acting sooner to halt Iraq's offensive against pro-Iranian Kurds.

And from some Iranian friends came private concern that Iran might be next in line for a dose of U.S. missiles.

But the Iranians were hardly alone in their confusion. It is shared by the entire neighbourhood. Indeed, these latest bombings do more to reveal the mess in the Middle East than to resolve it.

What they revealed first of all are the glaring impulses that have been hampering U.S. policy since the end of the Gulf war in 1991. Washington wants Saddam out of power. But it doesn't want to risk any U.S. lives or press too hard on Iraq for his ouster, because it hurts the Iraqi people too much and

might fracture the whole country. The result is a policy of "containing" Saddam that is designed to squeeze him, but not too hard, and meanwhile hope that some "nice" Iraqis kill him.

Knowing, though, that if Saddam was left in power he might abuse the Kurdish minority in northern Iraq and the Shiite minority in southern Iraq, Washington set up "no-fly zones" in both areas to limit military operations there. But this has created a de facto fragmentation of Iraq and power vacuums in both areas that locals seek to fill.

In the north the Kurdish tribes scrambled for control. Given the intensity of their rivalries, it was inevitable that one of them would try to enlist Saddam's help. He was eager to agree, since it gave him a foothold back in the area, and that is what triggered the U.S. bombing.

What the bombings also reveal is just how chaotic the situation with the Kurds has become in the U.S.-created power vacuum in northern Iraq.

Actually, it's very simple the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) of Massoud Barzani says it sought help from Saddam because its rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), led by Jalal Talabani, was getting support from Iran. The PUK says it got involved with Iran only because the KDP was leading it with support from Turkey.

The KDP entered into an alliance with the anti-Turkey Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) so it would have a stronger hand to fight the PUK. But

that meant that the PKK, which is pro-Syria, was fighting alongside the KDP, which is pro-Iraq, against the PUK, which is both pro-Iranian and pro-U.S.

That's the brawl the United States is trying to sort out. Finally, the bombings reveal the broader strategic morass in the Middle East today, which is by no means the fault of America. There aren't three countries in the Middle East today aligned with one another.

The core countries — Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan, Syria and the Palestinians — are not in sync, and the periphery countries — Turkey, Iran, Iraq and the Gulf Arabs — are all pulling in different directions.

The bottom line: The half-finished Gulf war and the half-finished Arab-Israeli peace process and the half-baked U.S. containment policies for Iran and Iraq (containments that are rhetorically all-out war but operationally something far less) have failed to produce a new order in the Middle East.

Instead, they have contributed to a regional disorder in which Washington does not have a united front to support its strategies or many partners to help manage its contradictions.

Bill Clinton chose the least intrusive form of intervention — cruise missiles — to try to stabilise this situation for at least a few more months. But make no mistake, this saga is only half over — The New York Times.

Gunhild Sehlin — the teacher, the author, the relief worker

By Åke Olsson

GUNHILD SEHLIN has passed away. She was born in Vitsjö in 1911. Her closest relative is the adopted daughter Inger Burman-Persson.

Gunhild Sehlin was an educated elementary school teacher and worked in Vitsjö for more than 20 years. At the same time she wrote a number of appreciated books for children. Some of them had motifs from her native district with its variable, at times violent, history. "Snapphaneborger" was published in 1959 and was followed by "Brotollen", "Pelle Snapphane" and "Har bor jag mitt i skogen". Other books — "Marias lilla älska", "Hassan flyktspojken" and "Älsan och barnet" where dominated by Biblical themes, which clearly depicted her warm devoutness. Gunhild Sehlin also wrote a lot of short plays for children, some of which were taught at schools.

As time passed by, Gunhild Sehlin had the chance to learn more about the countries mentioned in the Bible. The Swedish Jerusalem Association offered her to work at "Den gode herdens skola" in Bethlehem at a time when it was part of Jordan. Meanwhile, she had contacts with IM, Individuell Mammiskohjälp. In the middle of the 1960s IM planned activities for refugees in the Middle East. She was able to help the organisation by offering information on the conditions of refugees, and when IM in the autumn of 1996 began its activities in the Eastern part of Jerusalem, she became one of its first employees in the city. The primary task was, at a request by the Jordanian government, to help mentally retarded children and youth and educate nurses and teachers on providing care for the mentally retarded. A recently-built house was thus rented and the work started in the spring of 1967.

At the same time, political tension in the region was rising. The authorities advised the Swedes to go home — but Gunhild Sehlin and the other members of the staff stayed. The 1967 war started. The house, which was turned into a children's home, was close to the border between Israel and Jordan and violent battles raged around them. A small boiler room in the basement was the place of refuge for Gunhild Sehlin along with about 10 other members of the staff and children during the critical days. When the Israelis occupied the West Bank, for some reason they declared Gunhild Sehlin not welcome and deported her. In "Uppdrag i Jerusalem" (1968) she lively described the atmosphere, people and situations — and IM's work — in the Holy City.

It was the Jordanian people, who had got the promise from IM regarding support for the mentally retarded, which made IM launch its activities in Amman. Gunhild Sehlin was called to lead this real pioneering work. Again, a house was rented, in which children got training and care. A small special school was started. The activity was hit by constant interruptions caused by political tension and constant hostilities, which culminated in the 1970 turmoil. Gunhild Sehlin did not listen to people advising her to go home because she could not leave her wards and the newly-started work. Traffic, electricity, water — everything stopped working. When the water-tank was pierced by a bullet, Gunhild Sehlin fixed it with glue and modelling clay. After a while calm was restored and the work continued.

It was shown that a greater contribution was necessary and IM built a modern building with a children's quarters, special school and sheltered workshop, something completely new in the Middle East and a model which would be emulated. This new building about 10 kilometres outside Amman put Gunhild Sehlin's administrative forces and capacity to negotiate a hard test. Cooperation with people in Jordan became further enhanced. During the following years, a lot of Jordanian institutions for the handicapped emerged. "But", said a Jordanian authority in the nursing area on an visit at IM, "it was you who brought the light!" Gunhild Sehlin showed the greatest devotion for her task, won the Jordanian staff's absolute confidence and really understood the mentally retarded children's situation, needs and possibilities. The depth of her understanding of their world can conspicuously be manifested in the long row of suggestive descriptions, pictures and poems which she sent to IM's periodical. A collection of the poems was published 1986; the title was "En visa om glädje".

Gunhild Sehlin stayed in the Middle East longer than anybody else of IM's Swedish staff. Upon her departure in 1985, King Hussein, who often had shown his interest in the Swedish project, gave her a medal and honoured her as "our friend".

When she was back in Sweden, she lived in Vitsjö. Her eyesight got worse and worse through the years, but she followed with great interest various developments in the world arena, and specially in the Middle East. On the last day of her life, she had a visit from Amman and discussed the future and possibilities for IM's activities there. The following night she had a bad cerebral haemorrhage and died after some hours.

Sulaimaniyeh falls to Barzani

(Continued from page 11)

terrible vengeance of Saddam Hussein," it said.

The KDP and Baghdad deny that Iraqi government were involved in the offensive.

The United Nations said 8,000 Kurds were heading for Iran Monday in scenes reminiscent of 1991 when hundreds of thousands of Kurds fled to the mountains as Baghdad crushed an uprising in Kurdistan, a PUK statement said.

However, Iran said it would not accept any more Iraqi Kurdish refugees and Sulaimaniyeh residents said the border was closed.

"The population fears repression by Iraqi forces," a PUK official in the city told AFP.

The Iranian news agency IRNA said: "In a climate of fear and anguish, thousands of women, children and elderly Kurds were seen as they were walking on foot across the mountainous regions of Iraqi Kurdistan towards the Iranian border."

The KDP said PUK resistance had "collapsed" on Sunday after it captured

Koi Sanjaq, a town of some 80,000 people on the road from Erbil to Sulaimaniyeh.

On Monday one arm of the KDP advanced south from Koi Sanjaq to take Dukan, 60 kilometres from Sulaimaniyeh, while in a separate offensive its fighters moved north to capture Ranya, 95 kilometres from Sulaimaniyeh.

"After the advances of our troops on Sunday, resistance of the PUK has collapsed on most of the fronts and thousands of PUK fighters have surrendered," it said.

U.S. warships and warplanes fired 44 cruise missiles at military targets in southern Iraq on Tuesday and Wednesday after the fall of Erbil to punish Baghdad for sending troops into the Kurdish "safe haven" in northern Iraq set up after the 1991 Gulf war.

However, it is now expressing reluctance to become involved in what U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry described as a Kurdish "civil war".

Mr. Talabani said in an interview with a Turkish

newspaper Monday that his group was the victim of a secret agreement drawn up by Iraq, the KDP and Turkey.

Turkey "knew in advance that Iraqi troops would take Erbil," and assured President Saddam that the Turkish air base of Incirlik would not be used as a launchpad for U.S. retaliatory strikes, Mr. Talabani charged.

Iraqi Kurdistan has been under the control of the two Kurdish groups in defiance of Baghdad since 1991. Their power-sharing arrangement broke down with the PUK and KDP locked in battle for the last two years.

Mr. Talabani meanwhile predicted that Mr. Barzani would come to regret his alliance with President Saddam after the fighting was finished.

"In aligning with Baghdad, the KDP has mounted a tiger which will destroy us all," a PUK statement said. "Once Saddam controls Kurdistan, he will no longer need his Kurdish ally and will consume the KDP and what remains of the Kurdish people."

Baghdad offers to keep PKK

(Continued from page 11)
ments or aircraft heading towards Iraq from the large military base at Diyarbakir in the southeast Anatolian region.

The Egyptian news agency MENA reported, meanwhile, that Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, in a telephone conversation with his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak, had assured the Egyptian leader that Turkey "did not plan to station its troops in Iraq."

Mrs. Ciller said, however, that Turkey is "faced with another fact — that the (inter-Kurdish) fighting in northern Iraq has reactivated the PKK."

"The region is suffering from a vacuum of authority," she said. "We are determined to take whatever steps possible to

ensure that the PKK does not kill innocent citizens."

On Sunday, Mrs. Ciller said the security zone would involve the installation of a sophisticated electronic system along the 330-kilometre mountainous border and that preparations were complete. "It is not a question of occupying the north of Iraq through military action," she stressed.

She said Monday that Turkey's plan to create the "buffer zone" should not be seen as "aggression" towards Baghdad and that Ankara was in constant touch with the Iraqi authorities, Arab states and the United States about the project.

She said Arab diplomats posted here would be invited to the foreign ministry in the next few

days to listen to Turkey's explanation for creating the zone.

The Turkish plan has come under fire from a number of countries, including Egypt, Iran, Iraq and Syria, but has received the support of Britain and the United States.

Iraq said earlier Monday it was trying to persuade Turkey against the move. "We are still continuing our contacts with the Turkish government to try to convince them not to make this blunder against Iraq," said Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz.

"Our position is limited to political resistance to this unjustified step," Mr. Aziz told the French television channel TF1. "Such a step will not solve the problem."

Nations line up for 'dry canal' sweepstakes

By Dan Trotta
Reuters

MEXICO CITY — The Panama Canal has served east-west shipping through the Americas for more than 80 years, but now a growing list of other countries from the region want in on the act.

Four countries — Mexico, Colombia, Honduras and Nicaragua — all say they have plans to compete alongside the historic Panama Canal, each jockeying to be first or risk losing out on the potentially lucrative sweepstakes.

The Panama Canal has neared its capacity, sometimes backing up for days, if not weeks, during maintenance, at a time when east-west container ship traffic is growing at a rate of between five and eight per cent a year.

What's more, the export-oriented "Asian Tiger" economies of the Far East are now building container vessels so big that they do not fit in the Panama Canal's narrow locks.

Instead of digging another canal — a costly proposition evoking memories of workers stricken with yellow fever toiling and dying in ghastly conditions — three of the countries propose building a "dry canal."

The idea is to link Atlantic and Pacific deep-water ports with a high-speed rail line shuttling containers across the middle American isthmus.

Only Colombia is talking about a Panama-style

waterway, but because of costs and environmental damage it is also considering an interoceanic road and railway.

Officials at the U.S. government's Panama Canal Commission roll their eyes with bemused exasperation, writing off the proposals as so much "pie in the sky."

Still, analysts say market demand for a second canal is real and that one of the proposals might just fly.

"First you take a look at

Europe.

"This idea is very old," Manfred Rucker, a shipping consultant based in Mexico City, told Reuters. "I knew of one project in Nicaragua when I was there in 1962. Then there was another one in Costa Rica with Japanese investment. Then about 1975 or so there was the project in Mexico."

Former Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo, in power from 1976 to 1982, planned a dry canal to

the proposal is expensive and far off.

The most advanced proposal on the books comes from Nicaragua, where a group of heavyweight international engineering and construction firms expects government approval to start feasibility studies this month.

The \$1.4 billion project, to be financed privately by a multi-national consortium, would allow Nicaragua to fulfil its per-

Orleans-based Trans-World Traders consulting firm begs to differ.

"I think I have the most well-thought-out proposal at the moment," Elder told Reuters. "I have looked into it to the point that if you're going to build a dry canal somewhere, it won't be as feasible as one in Honduras."

Environmental damage would be limited because the route already is deforested, and the port sites are ideal, he said. The Honduran government is keen to promote the project.

Critics of the notion say a dry canal effectively exists in the United States, where cargo taken by truck or train across the North American continent.

Bosco's Nicaragua group said the port authority of New York and New Jersey has lost half of its Asian business to the U.S. land bridge, but they also claim their dry canal could, over time, return about 30 per cent of the lost traffic. They see the United States, not Panama, as the main competition.

Panama Canal Commission officials call the proposals expensive and redundant, noting that they plan to invest some \$3 billion from 1997 to 2005 in capital improvements. They plan, for example, to widen the Gaillard cut, the narrowest point in the 83-kilometre canal, to allow two-way traffic.

Backers say a dry canal in Central America would provide a faster route than the Suez Canal for ships travelling between Asia and northern Europe

world economic growth, and then you have to figure shipping usually grows at a brisker pace," Jack Deino, a transportation equities strategist for the Inverlat financial group in New York, told Reuters.

"There's a lot of emphasis on exports and free trade right now."

World output grew by 3.5 per cent in 1995 and is projected at 4.3 per cent in 1997, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Moreover, backers of the idea say a dry canal in Central America would provide a faster route than the Suez Canal for ships travelling between Asia and northern

sipon business from the Panama Canal. Rail track was laid across the Tehuantepec isthmus between the Gulf of Mexico and Pacific Ocean ports, but the project never took off.

"They sat there and waited for people to come. They never did and they never will," Richard Wainio, planning director with the Panama Canal Commission, told Reuters. "It's a pie-in-the-sky idea that everyone has rejected."

Not Mexico. Transport Minister Carlos Ruiz Sacristan said last month that the government wants to rehabilitate the two existing ports and the rail line and privatise them, but admitted

ceived historic destiny as a canal site and finally make real the erstwhile dreams of Spanish kings and big-stick-carrying Americans. Nicaragua narrowly lost out to Panama as the U.S. government's chosen location for the original canal.

If plans hold, construction would start by 1998.

"They're talking and we're doing. That's the difference," said New York-based Don M. Bosco, leader of the Canal Interamericano de Nicaragua (CINN) consortium, referring to competing proposals. "Once we get started, we'll knock the others out of the box."

Thomas Elder of the New

High-tech Singapore slows down to deal with ghosts

By Vijay Joshi
Associated Press

SINGAPORE — Stuh your toe? Crash your car? Run out of kitchen gas? Blame it on hungry ghosts.

The spirits have been let out of hell, and Singapore's ethnic Chinese are wary of upsetting them during the month-long Hungry Ghost Festival.

According to traditional beliefs, ghosts roam the Earth during the seventh month of the lunar year and visit the homes of their relatives.

But those who died without descendants — or who were ignored by their kin while alive — wander the

streets, envious and hungry, looking for mischief until Sept. 12, when they must return before the gates of hell close.

Last week, Chow Kim Yien had just lit incense sticks in a prayer to his ancestors when he heard loud crashes outside his second-story apartment.

Mr. Chow looked out the window and saw that his parked car had been hit by another car, and that a third vehicle had slammed into the two.

"The moment I saw the crash, I said to myself, '...it must be the work of the hungry ghosts,'" said Mr. Chow, an electronics technician.

To appease the hungry spirits, the Chinese step up prayers. Giant, colourful joss sticks in the shape of dragons are burned on sidewalks all over Singapore, where three-quarters of its 3.3 million residents are ethnic Chinese.

They burn mock currency and miniature paper television sets, mobile phones and furniture as offerings to the ancestors for their use in the other world.

At auctions near the end of the festival, rich Singaporeans bid for "black gold," pieces of charcoal believed to bring luck and prosperity. Some coal nuggets fetch as much as \$13,000.

Every night, neighbourhoods reverberate with the shrill and amplified sounds of Chinese operas and pop concerts held under red-striped tents in brightly lit parks to entertain the dead.

The shows are accompanied by lavish feasts of grilled pork, broiled chicken, rice and fruit.

People appease the ghosts in hopes that the spirits will help them with jobs, school exams or even the lottery.

On the 15th day of the month — the most auspicious day of all — families offer cooked food to the spirits. On that day this year — Aug. 28 — so many households were

cooking food that the city's piped gas supply broke down in eight neighbourhoods. Supplier powergas blamed an 11 per cent increase in demand and a malfunction at the gas plant.

As a result, ghosts in many households remained unfed.

But the Taoist mission told the public not to be alarmed.

"In this case, something unexpected happened," said the mission's general secretary, Lee Choon Huat.

"So if the food was not ready, it doesn't matter, as long as (people) were sincere about repenting and asking for forgiveness."

Kabariti: Jordan is on threshold

(Continued from page 1)

vices as well as health centres services will be duly discussed with the concerned ministers in order to take decisions.

Meanwhile, Amman first district Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber issued a statement assailing the government and calling for its immediate resignation.

Mr. Jaber, a member of the Islamic Action Front, reiterated the opposition's views that the government was responsible for the riots that erupted in Karak

Aug. 16, contending that the arrests which followed the riots were unjustified.

The Islamist lawmaker also attacked the government for what he described as its bypassing of the Lower House of Parliament and "insulting" one of its members, Karak Deputy Nazih Ammarin, who had said that the premier threatened him by phone during the Karak riots and has thus far rejected to reconcile with Mr. Kabariti and is demanding a public apology.

Mr. Jaber, whose former colleague in the Islamic Action Front, Theeh Abdullah, received Mr. Kabariti in Hasbemi, called for the formation of a national unity government to replace the Kabariti cabinet, which, he charged, had not delivered on its promises to fight corruption.

Mr. Abdullah had to leave the IAF after he broke ranks with them and gave a vote of confidence to the Kabariti government against the consensus of the IAF parliamentary bloc early this year.

Netanyahu opens talks in U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

Clinton and with Defence Secretary William Perry before travelling to New York to meet American Jewish groups on Tuesday. "We'll discuss both with the secretary (of state) and the president the ongoing talks with the Palestinians and hopefully what will be a resumption of talks with Syria," Mr. Netanyahu said at the outset of his meeting with Mr. Christopher.

Mr. Christopher said over the weekend that Washington is seeking "concrete steps" from Israel that will ensure peace gains made by the Palestinians are not lost. At the meeting with Mr. Christopher, Mr. Netanyahu declined to comment on whether he would insist that Israeli steps be matched by reciprocal measures on the Palestinian side.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy told reporters in London Sunday following talks with Mr. Christopher that his government was committed to the Israeli-Palestinian accords "on the basis of reciprocity."

The Netanyahu visit to Washington was to build on the recent momentum for improved Israeli-Palestinian ties that led to the resumption in Jericho on Monday of negotiations on implementing the 1995 Palestinian self-rule agreement.

Mr. Netanyahu also has sought to kick-start negotiations with Syria on the basis of a proposal for an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

But Syria has balked at the idea and has reiterated its key demand that the Golan Heights be returned.

The United States has recently stepped up its efforts to try to broker a resumption of Israeli-Syrian talks but the latest envoy to Damascus, U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, last week said the two sides were not ready to resume negotiations.

Mr. Netanyahu said he would speak by phone with Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole who was campaigning Monday in the southern state of Louisiana.

Berri: Coalition won

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Saad obtained 120,000 votes.

The Amal leader said the coalition candidates averaged around 130,000 votes while he himself secured at least 160,000 votes.

The coalition imposed by Syria, which has 35,000 troops in Lebanon, allowed Hizbollah to choose four candidates while Amal named the remaining 17 from its own members and other pro-Syrian Muslim and Christian figures.

Mr. Berri called on the voters to respect the coalition in the fifth and final round of voting to be held on Sunday in the eastern Bekaa Valley.

The 48.2 per cent turnout in Shiite-dominated South Lebanon was the highest in the country so far, surpassing Mount Lebanon's 45 per cent turnout, northern Lebanon's 40 per cent and Beirut's 31 per cent.

Jordan regrets Iranian move

(Continued from page 1)

with Iran "acting from a stand of its keenness to preserve the strongest possible ties with the Arab and Islamic nations."

Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb expressed regret over the Iranian decision and said in a statement that trade links normally are based on mutual interests, stressing that Jordan has always sought strong trade relations with friendly nations based on mutual respect.

Referring to the visit of the Iranian minister of industry to Jordan in June 1995, Mr. Abul Ragheb said it was in harmony with Jordan's orientations and was crowned with the initialing of the trade agreement in question.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said that Iran's criticism of Jordan's political and national decisions "are all unjustified and unacceptable." Jordan will remain keen on promoting its ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran at all levels, he added.

Israel and PLO resume negotiations

(Continued from page 1)

cussed for the pullback, which is more than five months behind schedule.

"There are a number of issues which have to be finalised before we agree on Hebron," he said.

He said the two sides had agreed to invite Australia, Denmark, Italy, Sweden and Turkey to contribute monitors to an international observer force in Hebron, where a small Norwegian team is currently patrolling areas where Jews and Palestinians are in daily contact.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai are scheduled to meet later this week for further talks on Hebron.

Israeli spokesman Moshe Fogel said there was an "understanding" on both sides (Monday) that certain modifications have to be made on the Hebron rede-

ployment, because of the necessary security alterations that have to be made."

But Palestinian negotiator Hassan Asfour insisted "this is not true."

The resumption of full political negotiations was decided last week at the first meeting between Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat, the PLO chairman and elected president of the Palestinian National Authority.

Mr. Erakat said following Monday's inaugural meeting that separate committees on civilian, economic and security matters would continue the discussions "on a parallel level."

Israeli officials said Monday they did not expect the meeting to yield much more than an agenda for future talks. The steering committee used to meet about once a month before the May elections.

Government pays JD 88.58 million in salaries to 464,449 citizens each month

This is the first of a three-part article focusing on the size of Jordan's government, semi-government and government-affiliated institutions and the heavy financial burden that the Kingdom shoulders from such a bloated sector

By Samir Ghawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Each month, the government pays JD 88.58 million in salaries to 464,449 civil and military personnel including the retired and those working at independent public institutions, state universities and other entities such as the Social Security Corporation and the Central Bank of Jordan.

According to a fresh study prepared by the Department of the Budget (DoB) two months ago, the state's annual salary payments amount to JD 1.063 billion, most of which go to civil servants and military personnel.

Both categories, the study said, employ 284,106 persons who are paid JD 652 million per year with the civil service alone accounting for JD 333 million and benefiting 134,106 employees.

Retired personnel from both the civil service and the military take JD 189 million per year, or an average of JD 1,650 annually for each person when the amount is divided by the total number of 114,449 retired persons. Per month, the salary would be an average of about JD 140.

Those working in 26 independent public institutions get JD 81 million per year in salaries from the Treas-

asury, the study said. Employing 31,211 persons, the salary category represents nearly 25 per cent of the JD 341.6 million recurrent spending of these institutions which include the Investment Promotion Corporation, the Employment and Development Fund, the Telecommunications Corporation, the Specifications and Standardisation Corporation, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, in addition to another 20 institutions.

Other entities which depend on the government to pay the salaries of their employees numbering 24,998, take JD 76 million from the Treasury each year. In addition to the two, mentioned earlier, they include the Amman Financial Market, the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the Royal Scientific Society, Royal Jordanian, the Municipality of Greater Amman, the Industrial Estates Corporation and the municipalities and villages councils. Combined they are 15 entities.

The remaining five state universities employ 9,685 persons who account for JD 65 million of the JD 1,063,000 million overall total that the government pays in salaries.

If looked at from a percentage perspective, the study reveals that the wages of the civil servants, military personnel and retired persons account for 64 per cent of the recurrent spending JD 841 million out of JD 1,304.6 million. For each of the three categories the percentages are 25.5, 24.5 and 14.5 respectively for a total of 64.5 per cent.

The salaries of those employed in the universities account for 69 per cent of their JD 94.2 total for recurrent spending.

Problems aplenty for Japan, says EPA

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's economy faces a number of problems that can only be dealt with through deregulation and reform, the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) has said.

In its annual white paper on the economy, entitled Economic Survey of Japan, the agency cast back over what went wrong over the past four years to yield virtually no growth.

It said growth in real income had been limited by the slow development of the labour market, but disinflation, low interest rates and sluggish asset prices had not had a big negative impact on the economy.

"The recovery of real income through improving employment will therefore contribute most to the recovery of consumption," it forecast.

But it said there were no signs of strong recovery in plant and equipment investment, which has held back since the collapse of the speculative "bubble economy" at the end of the 1980s. Excess capital stock built up in the heady years of the bubble economy led to an

adjustment of equipment investment, which has been prolonged due to inefficient investment during the period, it said.

The yen's appreciation played a role in decreasing capital stock for production through a decrease in exports and an increase in imports, though the investment environment has improved since the yen's reversal in the middle of last year, it said — from around 80 to the dollar to around 103.

Equipment investment by non-manufacturers was affected by the drop in asset prices, particularly land, after the bursting of the bubble.

Akira Sadahiro, a research director at the EPA, said: "There has been a stagnation of capital investment, but the investment climate has gradually improved on recalculation of the yen."

Another problem was unemployment — now at an historic high of 3.5 per cent, low by Western standards but uncomfortable in a society used to near-full employment and a job for life. The EPA said there had

been a "drastic shift" from self-employed workers and family businesses to employees, particularly in wholesale and retail sectors.

"The main causes behind this change are the recent distribution revolution and the change of environment due to increased international competition," it said. "Employment in the service sector has especially increased."

The EPA noted demand for employees with special knowledge or skills "is relatively strong in an environment of relatively weak economic recovery."

"Changing demand in occupations means that companies are tending to actively utilise highly skilled workers from outside," it said.

A symptom of the existing labour structure, including a "mismatch of skills," has been that rising unemployment among the young and old.

Whereas in the past few years the government has injected hundreds of billions of dollars to stimulate growth, that option had now expired.

Expert says Jordan's telecommunication opportunity is privatisation

By Christina Schlegel
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The chance for Jordan to catch up with the international trend to liberalise the telecommunication market and to profit from its tremendous impact it has on a country's economic situation lies in the creation of a competitive framework.

This was emphasised by Carmine Tagliatela Jr., director of international public policy at MCI International in his presentation Monday and accepted as the seminar's theme.

The final day of the workshop on international telecommunications opportunities in Jordan was dedicated to familiarise the participants with the advantages of deregulation and privatisation demonstrated on the case of Jordan.

Referring to the speech of the minister of post and telecommunications on Saturday, Mr. Tagliatela said that he shared the minister's vision of setting up a well-developed, modern and reliable telecommunications sector which he considered it to be a key contributor to the country's growing economy.

"This is a significant vision," he said, "and Jordan already took essential steps to realise it. Like the recent implementation of the new telecommunications law in 1995 which provided the legal basis of the separation of the regulatory, policy and service provisions, previously carried out by the government and the setting-up of an independent Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC), with the responsibility for imple-

menting policy and regulating the sector."

During the three-day workshop which was meant as a guideline to the Jordanian government, the organisers sought the expert's advice and help to smooth and quicken the transformation process and thus liberalise the Jordanian telecommunication market.

Referring to the minister's hope for a productive partnership between Jordan and its international business partner, which should result in a win-win relationship, Mr. Tagliatela emphasised the three C-winners which are connected to privatisation: the customers, the country itself and the carriers.

"By 1998," he stated, "most European countries are expected to have opened their domestic and international markets to competition and competition in long distance calls is a big money winner."

The American market today earns \$5 billion a year and is expected to increase its income up to \$10-\$15 billion by the year 2000.

Mexico, which just opened its market last month is witnessing a growth rate of up to 300 per cent.

The lecturer explained the steps that Jordan has to keep in mind on its way towards the opening of its market and the motivation

to liberalise the sector.

He highlighted the economic development factor which gives an incentive for new investments as being the first priority.

On the customers side, he indicated that there is the extension of social benefits, the access to new technologies and the provision of the consumers with choices.

In order to achieve those aims, Mr. Tagliatela stressed the need for a strong regulatory environment to succeed in restructuring the market.

According to the presentation, this regulatory authority has to ensure the independence from the government and any other institution, the transparency to guarantee the competitors equality, the objectivity which provides budget security and experienced staff and the adaptability to secure flexibility within a stable framework in order to handle dynamic changes that require creative regulatory response.

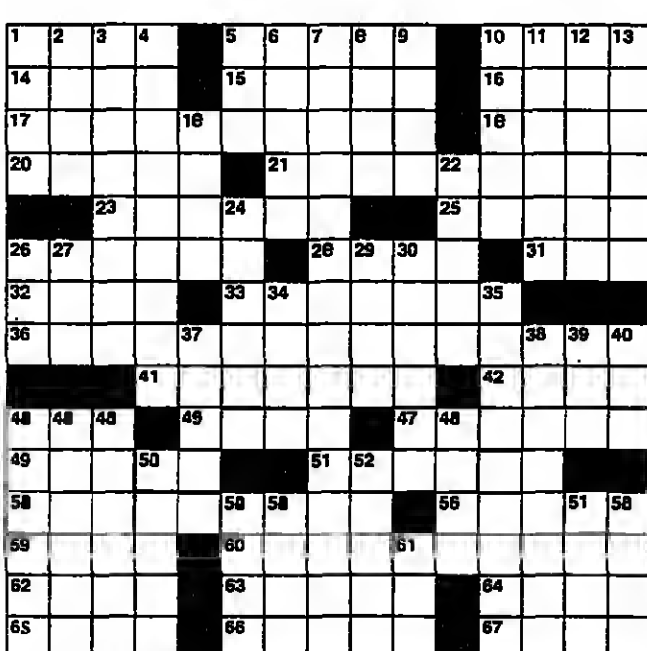
The options given by MCI to restructure the Jordan market are either the open entry system, which prevents the competitors from being prejudiced but which will cause inefficient allocation of capital at the same time, or the limited entry system which favours

(Continued on page 9)

THE Daily Crossword by Avery P. Bromfield

ACROSS

- 1 Son of Noah
- 5 Legislate
- 10 Party nosh
- 14 Party giver
- 15 "Robinson Crusoe" author
- 16 On — with (equal to)
- 17 Astronaut/cosmonaut turf
- 19 Tattered
- 20 Strong effort
- 21 Impart fragrance to
- 23 Iron will?
- 25 Turner and Louise
- 26 Unrefined
- 28 Bridge position
- 31 Explosive letters
- 32 Show excessive love
- 33 Infinite
- 36 Novel by 13D
- 41 Certain bird
- 42 Little — (Dickens heroine)
- 43 Newhart
- 46 Karate prize
- 47 Equally
- 49 Tropical palm
- 51 Fairy tale monster
- 53 See 13D
- 56 Observed
- 59 Stravinsky ballet
- 60 That can be told
- 62 Sound of distress
- 63 Copywriter (53A)
- 64 Silent one
- 65 Magnani or Mollo
- 66 Inventor Nikola
- 67 Wriggly



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- #### DOWN
- 1 Like tame horses
 - 2 Time period
 - 3 Approximate calculation
 - 4 Earth's highest peak
 - 5 Copy chiefs: abbr.

- 6 Katmandu's land
- 7 Novel by 13D
- 8 Tropical tree
- 9 Swarm
- 10 Page of song
- 11 Stretch — (make an exception)
- 12 Jungle hero
- 13 US novelist (with 53A)
- 18 Soaks
- 22 Perfume
- 24 — weenie
- 26 Chicago summer time: abbr.
- 27 Partner of aah
- 29 Gaelic
- 30 Sound sleeper
- 34 Extravagant
- 35 Typewriter feature
- 37 Of the city
- 38 Rational
- 39 Building wing
- 40 Cooey

- 43 — Islands
- 44 Salem's state
- 45 Lament
- 48 Waistcoat
- 50 Character in "Julius Caesar"
- 52 Circular
- 54 Pesky insect
- 55 Move diligently forward
- 57 Israeli airline
- 58 Paper size
- 61 Collection of anecdotes

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



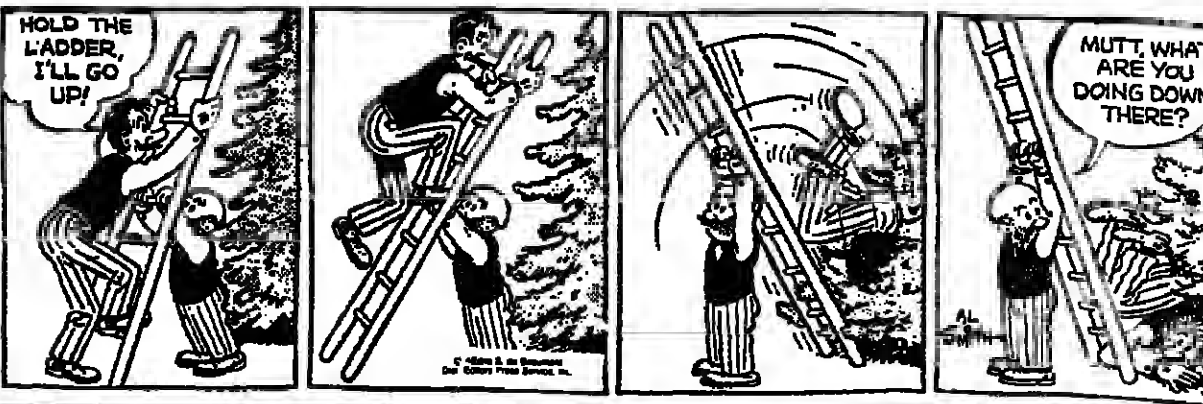
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Corroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Before you make investments today study them well so you don't make any financial mistakes which could be costly. An advisor is not on the right track later this evening, so be careful with is said and take it with a grain of salt.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Don't be forceful with others today to gain your own way or you could find difficulty in dealing with them. Try to be only with proven fellow associates socially and you will discover you can be successful by their presence.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Keep your frustrations to yourself today or others you come in contact with could resent your airing them. Be kind to your mate later this evening by showing more affection to him or her and this will be well received.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You feel that today a close friend is working against your interests so keep a weary eye on information you have obtained. A more aboveboard attitude later this evening could get results for your success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Try not to irritate today one who can be of assistance to you on your career activities. Take no risks where credit matter are concerned or you can find yourself in financial difficulty. Creativity is high for you to succeed.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are eager today to make changes and get into new career activities, however this is not the right time for such. "Later" this evening you can make tremendous headway by seeking a knowledgeable person for assistance on tasks.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Try not to disagree today with someone in business because you feel you are being cheated since you may be the one in error, so you should verify all of your steps for a new project. Later this evening consult with a hewig.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be tactful today with someone who is persistent as you concerning some matter and don't become too high-handed. Later this evening you compromise for good results on new career activities which are important.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be careful today in handling any career activities you have to do and avoid damage to your reputation through the mistake of others. The evening can be very pleasant for your loved ones if you are patient.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't be forceful with your friends today in order to go out together to have a good time. Later this evening can be successful if you consult with a knowledgeable person who can provide you with suggestions on completing your tasks.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Try to have more harmony at home today and remove the cause of friction which could be present. Be more considerate of others later this evening and you can gain their support for your career activities.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be most careful in communications of any sort today so that there won't be any misunderstanding where there are critical procedures. Later this evening you can prevent any disagreements which could prove costly.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli.

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Sampras wins U.S. Open on late coach's birthday

NEW YORK (AFP) — Pete Sampras, spurred on by thoughts of his late coach Tim Gullikson, salvaged his 1996 season Sunday with a straight-sets victory over Michael Chang in the men's singles final at the U.S. Open.

"This has definitely saved my year," said Sampras, who defeated Chang 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) for his fourth victory in the event.

"Whatever happens, I have achieved what I wanted to achieve this year, and that was to win a major."

The win gave Sampras his fourth year in a row with at least one Grand Slam title, and gave Sampras a chance to salute Gullikson, who died of a brain tumor in May.

"Today is Tim's birthday. He would have been 45 today, and I was thinking about him all day today and during the match Sampras said."

"Even though he's not with us, he's still very much within my heart."

Gullikson's birthday, coupled with the fact that it was his last chance to win a major this year, made the Open an emotional fortnight for Sampras.

He barely survived a five-set quarterfinal against Spain's Alex Corretja, and had to take himself to a corner of the court to vomit in the fifth-set tiebreaker before holding on for a 7-6 (7/5), 5-7, 5-7, 6-4, 7-6 (9/7) victory.

In the semifinals, he wasted four match points in a third-set tiebreaker before beating Goran Ivanisevic in four.

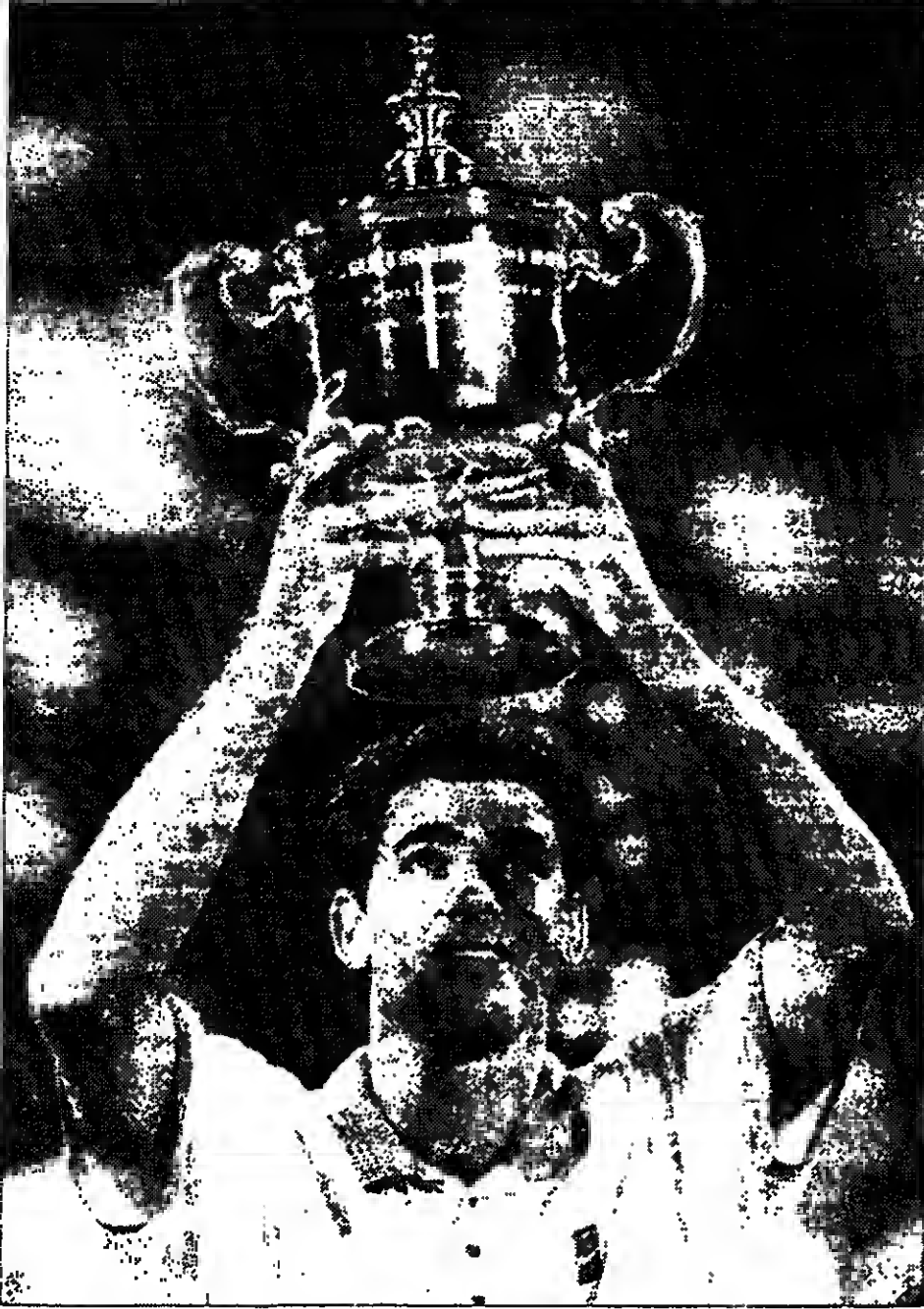
That made the third-set tiebreaker against Chang all the more tense.

"I was so relieved when that shot went out," Sampras said of Chang's match-ending service return. "I just wanted it to be over."

Sampras' victory took his total of Grand Slam titles to eight, and prevented Chang from usurping his place at the top of the world rankings. Chang did move up to a career-high second in the world.

Chang thought the match was closer than the score reflected.

"The first set, a few points could have gone my way," said Chang, who was playing in his third Grand Slam final since his precocious win at the French



Top seed and number one player in the world Pete Sampras holds the U.S. Open men's singles trophy over his head after winning the title for the second year in a row. Sampras won the final over Michael Chang 6-1 6-4 7-5 (7-3) (Reuters photo)

Open in 1989. "I had break points on both his first service games."

But Chang's big chance came in the third set. Leading 6-5 on serve, he set up one break point — and set point — with an overhead smash, but netted a makeable forehand volley.

"Unfortunately, I wasn't able to close out the third set," he said.

"I was a little unlucky it clipped the tape. From there it was a whole new ballgame."

Sampras took a 6-2 lead in the tiebreaker when Chang hit a forehand long. Chang saved the first match point with a backhand winner, but on the next point his backhand service return

went long. Sampras broke Chang in the second and fourth games to win the first set in 28 minutes.

After breaking Chang in the opening game of the second, Sampras dropped his own serve in the sixth with a double fault on a break point that knotted the set score at 3-3.

Sampras regained the upper hand with a break for 5-4, wasted one set point in the next game with a double fault then closed it out when Chang sailed a forehand over the baseline.

In the third, neither player earned a break point against the other until Chang's opportunity in the 12th game.

"The first two sets today, I thought I played as well as I could," Sampras said. "My serve was there, everything was just clicking."

"I knew he would come around and start playing better, and he did in the third set. He served a lot better and made it tight."

The match started more than two hours later than scheduled because of a thunderstorm that struck moments after Steffi Graf beat Monica Seles for the women's title.

Graf scored a 7-5, 6-4 victory in her fifth U.S. Open triumph and 21st Grand Slam singles win.

Graf claims fifth U.S. Open crown

NEW YORK (AFP) — Steffi Graf defeated arch-rival Monica Seles 7-5, 6-4 here Sunday to win her fifth U.S. Open singles title — the 21st Grand Slam triumph of her career.

"It was really, really difficult to play this tournament," said Graf, whose father Peter went on trial on tax evasion charges in Germany on Thursday.

"Last year was extremely difficult, and this year was not any easier. It has been a struggle to stay focused."

Against Seles, however, Graf showed none of the lapses in concentration that marred her previous six matches.

She thumped down 10 aces through the 87-minute match and gave Seles only one chance to break her — which Seles took advantage of in the first set.

Seles, who also lost to Graf in the final here last year, said the German player's serve was the key to her victory.

"She served some awesome serves today," Seles said. "She just kept getting her first serve in and I had no chance of returning it and I had a hard time holding my serve."

Graf called her service game "incredible," and admitted she wasn't sure how she managed to raise her game so far above the quality she displayed in earlier rounds.

"To me it's still a big question, too, how I'm able to play that well when I need to," Graf said. "I wish I would know, because I felt so nervous before the match."

"I had an upset stomach, I was really nervous. Then I went out on the court, I loosened up so much more. Suddenly, I had a real good, positive attitude."

"I don't know how or why it came, because I haven't really played well during the tournament."

Graf broke Seles in the first game of the second set,



Steffi Graf of Germany holds up the U.S. Open women's singles trophy, as her opponent Monica Seles (rear) of the U.S. claps. Graf won the match in straight sets 7-5 6-4 for her fifth U.S. Open title (Reuters photo)

and never looked back.

"I was disappointed when I lost my break early on, but she put the pressure on me all the time," Seles said.

With Graf serving for the match at 5-4, Seles saved one match point with a forehand winner, but Graf grabbed the title with a forehand volley that just clipped the net cord on the next point.

Moments later, the black clouds had rolled in during the match opened, and a hasty trophy presentation was made in driving rain.

I don't think I felt the rain at all," said Graf, who said her main emotion was "the joy of winning it and of playing that well."

"I didn't expect to be able to show that kind of tennis today," she added.

As the sky darkened, the temperature fell and the wind whipped up, it looked like she might not finish off the match before the storm started.

But Graf said she didn't allow herself to worry about a possible rain delay at such a crucial time.

"That's the least thing I thought about at all," she said. "It got really dark, it was difficult to see the points. But it was something I didn't really focus on."

Graf got her first break to go up 2-1 in the first set. She served for the set at 5-4, but after missing one set point with a forehand error she surrendered her serve.

She needed four break points in the next game to regain the advantage when Seles sent a backhand cross court wide.

Graf took the set in the next game, netting a backhand on her second set point but winning the next one with a service winner.

Graf has now won all six of the Grand Slam events she has entered in 1995 and 1996. She missed the Australian Open both years because of injury.

Seles, who won the Australian Open in January and who shares the world number-one ranking with Graf, said Graf's performance in the year's major tournaments proved the German was the best this year.

"Steffi clearly is number-one," Seles said. "She won three Grand Slams. Those tournaments, in my mind at least, show who is the number one player."

Marseille lose emotional Bastia return

PARIS (AFP) — France's former European champions Marseille made an emotional losing return to Bastia on Sunday.

They went down 2-0 to the Corsicans at the Furiani stadium where 17 people died when a stand collapsed during a cup-tie between the two clubs four years ago.

Bastia, who had to fight for permission to play Sunday's game at their small ground, part of which is still being renovated, clinched their win with first-half efforts from Moravcik and Anton Drobnyak.

Although no tickets were sold to Marseille fans, members of the Marseille supporters' club and relatives of the dead laid a wreath at the ground before the kick-off.

The victory moved Bastia up the table and they joined six clubs on 11 points from six matches — three points behind unbeaten pacesetters Paris St. Germain.

Paris St. Germain shared a 0-0 draw to their eagerly-awaited but disappointing top-of-the-table clash with Monaco. Both sides squandered chances.

Bordeaux, the only other side in the division with

PSG who have yet to lose, continued their superb run by beating Nice 1-0 away — Johann Micoud scoring the all-important goal after half an hour.

Lens, thrashed 5-1 by Monaco a week ago, managed to hold on to second place one point adrift of PSG, when they shared a draw goalless affair with Cannes while reigning champions Auxerre recovered after their 2-1 defeat at Metz to beat visiting Caen 2-0.

Nantes, champions just two years ago continued to struggle. They went down to their fourth defeat when they were beaten 3-1 at Le Havre.

The matches between Lyon and Montpellier, and Lille and Guingamp, ended in 1-1 draws, while Nancy crashed to Metz by the only goal in the northeastern derby.

In Spain, a rampant Real Madrid breezed past Hercules Alicante 3-0 in their first appearance of the season in front of home fans at the Bernabeu stadium. Fabio Capello's men sealed their victory with a Predrag Mijatovic goal and two more from teenager Raul

Gonzalez. Real's old rivals Barcelona snatched a last gasp 2-1 home win in their derby clash with Espanyol. Watched by former manager Johan Cruyff, Barcelona came from behind to clinch their win at the Nou Camp stadium.

Tenerife stayed top of the Spanish League on goal difference thanks to a 1-0 away win at Logrones.

Vicenza's Uruguayan striker Marcelo Otero grabbed the headlines as Italy's Serie A campaign opened at the weekend. He blasted home all four goals in a shock 4-2 win at Fiorentina.

Champions AC Milan were also in the goals. They hammered newly-promoted Verona 4-1 at San Siro, courtesy of two goals by Simone, an exquisite third from George Weah, who ran the length of the pitch before slotting home, and a fourth from Roberto Baggio.

Inter Milan picked up a crucial three points as they opened with a workmanlike 1-0 win at Udinese and Parma beat Napoli 3-0.

Bayern Munich stayed on top of the Bundesliga after a

narrow squeak against newly-promoted Arminia Bielefeld while rivals Dortmund and Stuttgart both kept up the pressure with victories.

Bayern needed a 58th-minute goal from Christian Ziege to overcome Bielefeld at the Olympic stadium and preserve a one-point lead over defending champions Dortmund.

Dortmund also edged through 1-0 at Hansa Rostock Brazilian defender Julio Cesar scoring their late winner.

Stuttgart made it four wins out of four after scoring a 4-0 win over Cologne.

In the Netherlands, Dutch champions Ajax continued their poor start to the season by slumping to a 2-0 defeat at unfashionable Nijmegen.

Ajax, who have scored just two goals so far in the new campaign, are already eight points adrift of bitter rivals and league leaders PSV Eindhoven. PSV crushed Breda 5-0 to maintain their 100 per cent start. Feyenoord are in second place after beating Willem II Tilburg 4-1.

Algerian clubs stay on course

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Algeria kept alive their hopes of becoming the first country to complete a clean sweep of African club titles at the weekend.

JS Kabylie look set to reach the last four of the Champions' Cup after a 1-1 draw with Petro Atletico in Angola and Mouloudia Oran took a 2-0 lead over Vita of Zaire in the Caf Cup quarterfinals.

Cup winners Cr Belouizdad received a bye when Supersport United of South Africa refused to visit Algeria, claiming their safety was at risk in a country where civil war has claimed more than 50,000 lives.

Veteran forward Djamel Menad was the Kabylie hero in Luanda, giving the former African champions a 40th minute lead which they held until Aboua levelled early in the second half.

Mouloudia scored just before and after half-time through Cheikh Benzergha and Ali Mecabih in Oran and look set for a semi-finals showdown with holders Etoile Du Sahel.

Tunisia and Egypt also achieved impressive results, leaving Morocco as the only country from the traditionally powerful North African region to struggle.

CS Sfaxien heightened Tunisian hopes of a third Champions' Cup title with a 5-0

drubbing of Senegalese visitors Diaraf, who had eliminated 1995 runners-up Asec of Ivory Coast in the previous round.

Etoile struck three times within 21 minutes against Unisport Bafah of Cameroon and finished 4-1 winners with a late goal from Samir Raouan raising his Caf Cup tally to six.

AFRICAN SOCCER

Egyptian champions Zamalek, seeking a record fourth success in Africa, relied on veterans Ashraf Kassem and Ahmed Al-Kass for the goals which brought a 2-0 win over Codm Meknes from Morocco.

In another clash between the countries, second division Fath Union Sportive were held goalless in Rabat by an Arab contractors team chasing a third Cup Winners' Cup title.

Champions' Cup holders Orlando Pirates of South Africa defeated Shooting Stars from Nigeria 1-0 after a mediocre match at Bloemfontein.

Cup Winners' Cup surprise packets Costa Do Sol from Mozambique lost their 100 per cent record, but will be satisfied with a 0-0 draw against once-mighty Canon Yaounde in Cameroon.

QPR to name new manager

LONDON (AFP) — Rangers' new owner Chris Wright suggested that a new manager would be installed at Loftus Road before Wednesday's game at Norwich.

QPR will select their successor to Ray Wilkins from a shortlist of three — strongly rumoured to include former England coach Terry Venables.

Venables currently has a consultancy role at first division Portsmouth but could be tempted by the prospect of a second spell in charge at Loftus Road.

A 2-0 home defeat against WBA on Saturday, which saw Rangers slip to ninth place in division one, has added to the urgency of finding a replacement for Wilkins.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA SPECIES Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 699238 PLAZA The Arab Cinema Surprise Ahmad Zaki...in Naser 56 (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Arnold Schwarzenegger & Vanessa Williams ...In ERASER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Julia Roberts ...In SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Ammoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimeh & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 825155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights At 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155-640155
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Asian Basketball Championship Jordan defeats Iran to finish 9th

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE KINGDOM'S Under-18 basketball team Monday scored a 69-62 win over Iran in the match deciding 9th and 10th places at the Asian Basketball Championship which concludes in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Tuesday.

Jordan team had scored a 89-74 win over India, an 158-44 crushing win over Bangladesh and a 72-68 win over Hong Kong in the second round of the 15-nation tournament.

The only other Arab team in the competition, Qatar, who beat Jordan 67-42 in the first round, qualified to the semifinal round and will play Japan. China plays Korea in the other semifinal.

Jordan had played in Group 3 alongside Qatar, the Philippines and Singapore in the first round. After only managing a win over Singapore they dropped out of contention for the quarterfinal round which included only the top two teams in each of the four groups.

The Kingdom's team first took part in the U-18 championship last year when they scored a major upset over hosts, the Philippines, to take third place and became the first Jordanian team to qualify to the World Championship.

The team then beat the Philippines in the final second 72-71, Singapore 88-35, Hong Kong 71-24, Japan 73-56 and Thailand 62-56. They lost twice to eventual titleholders South Korea 75-61 and 69-51 and to second-placed China 88-49 in the semifinal round.

Jordan Basketball Federation officials noted that this year's participation was different and the team was less competitive for a host of reasons including the timing of the competition for mostly tawjihi players, the lack of funds, and the unavailability of an official training court.

However, team coach Murad Barakat, was chosen as assistant to Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) head coach Tom McCarthy. Barakat will therefore be attending an lecturing at all upcoming ABC clinics and seminars.

Jordan's team includes Tawfiq Marar, Iyad Ahdene, Ayman Du'eybes, Bashar Huneidi, Mrhef Nabulsi, Ala' Bilheisi, Ra'fat Daraghmech, Mohammad Bashir, Mo'tasem Salameh, Bassam Qamhih, Nihad Madi, Leith Farouqi and Omar Abdallah.

The competing countries are Korea, India and Malaysia, China, Kazakhstan, Japan, and Bangladesh, Thailand, Chinese Taipei, Iran, Hong Kong, Singapore, Qatar, the Philippines and Jordan.

Romario threatens to quit Valencia

VALENCIA (R) — Brazilian World Cup striker Romario threatened to leave Valencia on Monday after being left out of the squad for Tuesday's vital UEFA Cup clash with holders Bayern Munich.

"I'm annoyed, I've come here to play," said Romario, suggesting that he could not stay at the club with coach Luis Aragones. "The manager said the same, it's either him or me."

Romario said Aragones had complained of his attitude towards training and that he had been informed of the decision after Monday morning's practice session.

The Spanish press has recently printed photographs of training runs in which Romario was left some way behind the rest

Arabian Horse Show starts Sept. 16

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian horse breeders and fans have already begun the countdown for the country's biggest annual equestrian event — the 7th Arabian Horse Show which will be held in Amman Sept. 16-20.

Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Sunday announced that the four-day event has a major sponsor, a fact that greatly enhances the chance of further success for the much-awaited event.

"We would like to extend our appreciation to Oracle database company who will be the main sponsor. RJ, the Forte Grand, a big number of government departments are also partners in the event," noted the Princess.

Princess Alia, who heads the Jordanian Arabian Horse Association and the Royal Jordanian Equestrian Federation, said she was very encouraged by the fact that number of local enthusiasts and participants in the sport was increasing from one year to the other.

Although one of the main aims of the show is to enable horse breeders to



Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Sunday announces the start of the countdown for the 7th Arabian Horse Show (Petra photo)

qualify their horses for international competitions, this year a number of world championship titleholders will also be taking part.

"We are very happy with the fact that participants are not only coming for the purpose of qualification. A number of world championship winners will be participating. This shows serious interest in the event."

The horse show will be held at the Royal Stables and will include a horse show, a judging course, show jumping competitions, and horse races.

Princess Alia explained that the endurance race will be held at a later date on Oct. 18 in order to allow the organisers ample time to prepare for the event.

Federation spokesman Ahmad Abul Ragheb said registration for the event had already started and that 75 participants had registered so far.

Judges for the Arabian Horse Show will be coming from Australia, Holland, Sweden, Poland and Morocco.

The show will be concluded Sept. 20 with the 4th Middle East Championship in which horses will be competing for the title of 'supreme champion.'

Smith, Aikman spark revived Cowboys

DALLAS (AFP) — Emmitt Smith shook off a severe neck injury here Sunday, rushing for 94 yards and catching a touchdown pass to lead American football champion Dallas to a 27-0 rout of the New York Giants.

The Cowboys looked nothing like the club which struggled on offense in a 22-6 National Football League opening loss at Chicago on Monday, a game in which Smith was carried off and hospitalised with a neck brace.

"I felt pretty good," Smith said. "It took a lot of mental preparation, but after I got my first hit I felt OK. I haven't reached the end zone the way I like to. But it was exciting."

Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman completed 19-of-27 passes for 228 yards and threw touchdown passes to Deion Sanders and Kevin Williams as well as Smith while the Dallas defence allowed the Giants only 96 total yards.

Former Dallas coach Jimmy Johnson has his new club, the Miami Dolphins, off to a 2-0 start after a 38-10 romp at Arizona. Dan



Atlanta Falcons running back Eric Metcalf is tripped up by Minnesota Vikings line-backer Jeff Brady for a short gain in the second quarter at the Georgia Dome September 8. The Vikings went on to win the game 23-17 (Reuters photo)

Marino threw for 178 yards and two touchdowns. Miami allowed the Cardinals only 27 yards rushing.

Johnson replaced Tom Landry in Dallas and moved the Cowboys from 1-15 to two Super Bowl titles. At Miami he replaced Don Shula, the winningest coach in NFL history.

San Francisco, the 1995 Super Bowl champion, showed top form by ripping St. Louis 34-0, the first shutout by the 49ers in almost six years. The San Francisco defence allowed only 104 yards, scored two safeties and made seven quarterback sacks.

Quarterback Steve Young was 15-of-18 for 138 yards

but left the game in the third quarter with a strained groin. It was not believed to be a serious injury.

The Buffalo Bills held off New England for a 17-10 triumph, stopping Dave Meggett for no gain on the final play to keep the Patriots two yards from a tying touchdown.

Kansas City cornerback James Hasty returned a fumble 80 yards for a touchdown and linebacker Derrick Thomas scored a safety to lift the Chiefs past Oakland 19-3. The Raiders have lost 13 of 14 games to Kansas City in the 1990s and were without injured quarterback Jeff Hostetler. Rookie Eddie George

rushed for 140 yards to lead Houston past Jacksonville 34-27 while Barry Sanders ran for 125 yards and a touchdown in Detroit's 21-6 victory over Tampa Bay.

Mike Tomczak threw for 198 yards and two touchdowns and Pittsburgh beat Baltimore 31-17 while Terry Allen ran 28 yards for a third-quarter touchdown that was the difference in Washington's 10-3 triumph over Chicago.

In other games, Minnesota stopped Atlanta 23-17. Indianapolis downed the New York Jets 21-7, San Diego beat Cincinnati 27-14 and Denver dumped Seattle 30-20.

Italians seek to stamp their authority on UEFA Cup

PARIS (R1) — The Italians, who have long regarded the UEFA Cup as their property, had a disastrous campaign last season and are looking to the awe-inspiring lineup of Internazionale, Parma, Roma and Lazio to reestablish their authority.

Clubs from arguably the strongest league in the world won the UEFA Cup six times in the eight years until this year when none managed to reach the semifinals.

But the draw for the 1996/97 competition proper, which starts on Tuesday was not entirely welcomed in Italy with two sides coming up against French clubs, who have a growing reputation as Italian killers.

Internazionale, who now have two French players in defender Jocelyn Angloma and new signing Youri Djorkaeff, will travel to little Guingamp for their first match, while Lazio visit northern Lens, currently second in the French League.

Roma face a difficult task at home to dynamo Moscow but they will go into the game on a high following their 3-1 win against Piacenza on Saturday.

Parma, 3-0 winners

against Napoli in their last league match, will be without injured Argentine striker Herman Crespo when they entertain Portuguese side Vitoria Guimaraes.

Holders Bayern Munich may find their first test against Spanish team Valencia less worrying than they expected after Brazilian World Cup striker Romario was left out of the squad on Monday.

An angry Romario, who said he had been criticised during training, suggested he could not work with coach Luis Aragones and might leave the club he has just joined.

Romario arrived at Valencia from Flamengo unexpectedly during the close season to fill the gap left by the transfer of top-scorer Predrag Mijatovic to Real Madrid.

Other newcomers included Argentine international striker Claudio Lopez and Russian midfielder Valery Karpin as Valencia put together a side that looked capable of going one better than last year's second place in the Spanish League.

The draw was particularly tough on other German clubs as Borussia Moenchengladbach and Hamburg will face Arsenal

and Glasgow Celtic Glasgow respectively. Arsenal, still without a manager, look likely to keep England goalkeeper David Seaman on the sidelines.

Seaman has an injured hamstring and has missed Arsenal's last two outings.

The final German team involved, Schalke 04, are at home to Dutch side Roda JC Kerkrade, who have made a slow start to the season following the loss of several key players during the summer break.

Newcastle, boasting their record 15 million pounds sterling (\$23.4 million) England striker Alan Shearer, look forward to a fresh start on the European stage. They seem to have little to fear from modest Swedish side Halmstad, who go to St. James park following a 3-1 home defeat to Orjans Vall in their national league.

Slavia Prague head into their match against Swedish side Malmo still looking for the form which carried them to a surprise semifinal appearance in last season's UEFA Cup.

With summer signings taking away the likes of Karel Poborsky (Manchester United), Vladimir Smicer (Racing Lens) and Radek Bejbi (Atletico

Madrid), Slavia have paid the price of success.

Feyenoord Rotterdam have a fully fit squad for Tuesday's visit to CSKA Moscow and will be buoyed by Saturday's 4-1 drubbing of Willem II which keeps the Rotterdam side in second spot in the league two points behind PSV.

France, who have no fewer than five clubs in this season's UEFA Cup, will rely chiefly on star-studded Monaco, who host Polish side Hutnik Cracaw on Wednesday.

Monpellier will be at home to former Cup Winners' Cup holders Sporting Lisbon while Metz will travel to Austrian side FC Tirol



An artists impression of the main stadium for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney as construction of site commenced September 9. The stadium, the biggest ever Olympic Stadium, will seat 110,000 spectators, will cost A\$665 million (U.S.\$332 million) and is due to open in June 1999 (Reuters photo)

Sydney starts building work on biggest ever Olympic stadium

SYDNEY (R) — Construction of the biggest Olympic stadium in history began in Sydney Monday, with officials promising the 110,000 seat arena would be ready at least a year before the 2000 Sydney Games start.

The New South Wales state government, which has budgeted to spend a \$1.9 billion (U.S. \$1.5 billion) on staging the Games, said the A\$665 million stadium would be ready by June 1999.

The stadium will cost more than twice as much as the U.S.\$230 million Olympic venue in Atlanta for the 1996 Games.

"As it is the biggest Olympic stadium ever, more people will have the opportunity to see games events," New South Wales state Premier Bob Carr told reporters during a ceremony at the site.

"The stadium will set a new standard of excellence for spectators with unrivalled views and comfort," Carr said. The Sydney Olympics start in September 2000.

The Los Angeles Coliseum held the previous record for an Olympic venue with a capacity of 101,000 for the 1984 Games, a spokeswoman for the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic games told Reuters.

Local taxpayers are contributing A\$151 million to the cost of building the stadium at Homebush in Sydney's western suburbs, with a private sector consortium raising the balance in return for operating rights.

The stadium will host the opening and closing ceremonies, and track and field athletics. Olympic organisers have yet to decide the

venue for the soccer final.

As part of the design, the stands can be moved to change the shape of the stadium from an oval to a smaller rectangle for use as a venue for soccer or rugby matches.

The reversible realignment of the stands involves the removal of temporary seating at each end of the stadium, reducing the capacity to 80,000.

Tenders are still being considered by the state government for the Sydney Games' biggest infrastructure project, the Athletes' Village. Originally budgeted at A\$737 million, it will house 15,000 athletes.

A decision on the village is expected by the end of 1996.

JORDAN TIMES

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Ansari

Regent urges new criteria for administrative performance

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Monday urged the participants in a seminar on "Good Governance for Private Sector Development and Investment" to come up with a new and clear mechanism to serve as a criteria for the administrative performance.

"Such mechanism requires coherent bureaucratic procedures and I hope to see such coherence at the Arab-African level in all ideas that we put forth, like those aimed at investment promotion and in all matters concerning our entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the partnership with the European Union (EU) so that we in the Arab World can start a free trade zone with full transparency at the national, regional and international levels," said the Regent, who attended

part of Monday's session of the seminar.

The Regent also underlined the need for integration between the private sector and the government's public administration system. "Allow me to stress that the private sector and the government's public administration system should complement each other through their mutual and fruitful relationship. It will be most useful for the two sides to present social, economic and financial ideas in a well-defined system," he said.

"We have to realise that there is a basic objective of this meeting and that is to learn and to interact with the American continent, the united Europe and Eastern Asia region," he said, stressing the need for the transfer of technology in addition to methods for improving the administrative performance.

"We need to establish a

common basis for knowledge and to come up with a productivity mechanism for productivity," the Regent added.

Referring to the Middle East and North Africa Economic summit, the Regent said that he hoped that Arab countries would go to the meeting with concerted ideas about investments, employment of foreign labourers and others.

Prince Hassan presented a summary of the main topics and the questions and answers connected with the seminar. These mainly pertained to the relationship between the private and public sectors and the definition of their role and ways to coordinate their work as well as the obstacles obstructing investments in addition to methods for improving the administrative performance.

Iraq 'ignoring' U.S. 'suspension' of its oil-for-food deal with U.N.

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq has not received any official notification from the United Nations of the suspension of its "oil-for-food" deal with the world body and negotiations are continuing, a senior Iraqi oil official said Monday.

"We are completely ignoring" an American announcement of a suspension of the agreement allowing Iraq to sell limited quantities of oil in exchange for humanitarian supplies, said Saddam Zaban Hassan, director of the State Oil Marketing Organisation (SOMO).

"The American decision is unilateral. We have not received any notification from the United Nations," he said. "As far as we're concerned Resolution 986 still applies."

He said that two representatives of SOMO were currently in New York holding talks with the U.N. oil experts on setting prices for Iraqi crude.

"Once we reach agreement on a price structure, we can inform buyers and draw up contracts," Mr. Hassan said.

The SOMO director also said that a number of former buyers of Iraqi crude had shown interest in making purchases once the "oil-for-food" deal takes effect.

Under the agreement, an easing of U.N. Security Council sanctions slapped

on Iraq for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Iraq is allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to buy food and medicine.

President Bill Clinton announced last week that the deal with the United Nations was being suspended following the Iraqi army's Aug. 31 military intervention in the Kurdish "safe haven" set up by U.S.-led allied forces in northern Iraq.

The United States also launched 44 cruise missiles against southern Iraq for the intervention and expanded a flight-exclusion zone for Iraqi aircraft in the south of the country.

An Iraqi-backed Kurdish faction meanwhile urged the United Nations to implement the deal.

The appeal was issued by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), whose forces have now captured two strategic towns held by rivals in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), sending refugees racing for the Iranian border.

The two sides have been fighting for decades.

A KDP radio statement, echoing a Baghdad plea for U.N. action on the deal as soon as possible, was monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The deal, won qualified approval by EU (European Union) foreign ministers

meeting in Tralee, Ireland, at the weekend.

The radio quoted a spokesman for KDP leader Massoud Barzani said that Erbil was "under the control of a capable Kurdish security administration" ready to distribute food in the U.N. deal. The KDP broadcast said Erbil could provide facilities to conserve and distribute food commodities that would be supplied in exchange for the sale of oil in accordance with U.N. Resolution 986.

"We will do our best to cooperate with the U.N. agencies and to protect and support them so that they can fulfil their duties to distribute food supplies and other commodities. We will ensure the safety of the U.N. employees and the smooth progress of their work," the statement said.

"We stress that the situation in Erbil is calm and stable. We will do what is necessary to ensure further stability and security in the city."

"Therefore, we appeal to the United Nations and the concerned governments, particularly the EU governments that again called for implementing Resolution 986, as well as the U.S. government, to implement Resolution 986 quickly in order to alleviate the suffering of citizens in Iraqi Kurdistan and in all parts of Iraq," it said.

Bildt warns Serbs they cannot secede after general elections

SARAJEVO (AFP) — The Bosnian Serbs will not be allowed to secede from Bosnia after next weekend's elections, a top official warned Monday, and threatened action against any party seeking to split from the republic.

"If anyone tries to break off, that is not going to be accepted... We are prepared to take measures against anyone blocking the implementation of the constitution," international envoy Carl Bildt said.

He declined to say on what measures might be taken against the Serbs if they attempted to take areas they control out of Bosnia, but hinted economic pressure would be applied.

Secessionist rhetoric dominated weekend speeches by a string of Serb leaders campaigning for Saturday's landmark general elections, heightening Muslim fears of a Serb move to create a "greater Serbia" with neighbouring Serbia.

Mr. Bildt said the Balkan state would need a large international force for at least two years, to ensure the ex-belligerents did not settle their differences by reigniting the three and a half year conflict that devastated the country.

The force "must have the capability to deter anyone who considers any sort of military option in or around Bosnia in the next two years," he said.

There was general agreement peacekeepers should remain in Bosnia until the next elections, foreseen in September 1998.

And he insisted on full implementation of the Dayton peace accord for Bosnia, warning: "If we don't implement the constitution we are lost, so is peace."

Mr. Bildt said he hoped Bosnia's new institutions — a collective state presidency, national parliament and legislatures for Bosnia's Muslim-Croat and Serb halves — would be in place by the "end of" October — early November at the latest.

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Sarajevans put such weighty matters to one side to enjoy the first international athletics meeting held in the Bosnian capital since war broke out in 1992.

President Alija Izetbegovic opened the meeting, which began with a parade of more than 30 national flags from participating countries. Nine Olympic champions and several current world record holders were attending the meeting.

Overcast skies failed to dampen enthusiasm for the event, which proved so popular police were forced to block of traffic around the Kosovo stadium to cope with the crowds.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bildt con-

firmed details of a controversial plan to allow some "40,000 to 60,000" voters to cross into former enemy territory to cast their votes, alongside thousands more entering Bosnia from neighbouring Serbia. The operation would use around 700 buses rather than allow individual cars on the road so as to avoid the risk of "a gigantic traffic jam," he said.

The security plan also aimed to head off possible clashes on polling day, particularly around contested towns like Brcko, in the northeast, whose fate is subject to international arbitration.

Russian ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy missed a rally in the town organised by the hardline Radical Party of Republika Srpska (RPRS), after he was apparently detained by Serbian police on the border with Bosnia. Multiple objections have been raised to Saturday's polls, critics arguing basic conditions — a free media and the right to unhindered around the country — do not exist.

Washington is keen for the elections to go ahead and set a positive seal on the U.S. diplomatic push that yielded peace in Bosnia, and OSCE officials nursing the polls have stressed they expect the results to be certified.

Jordan and Israel agree to boost tourism cooperation

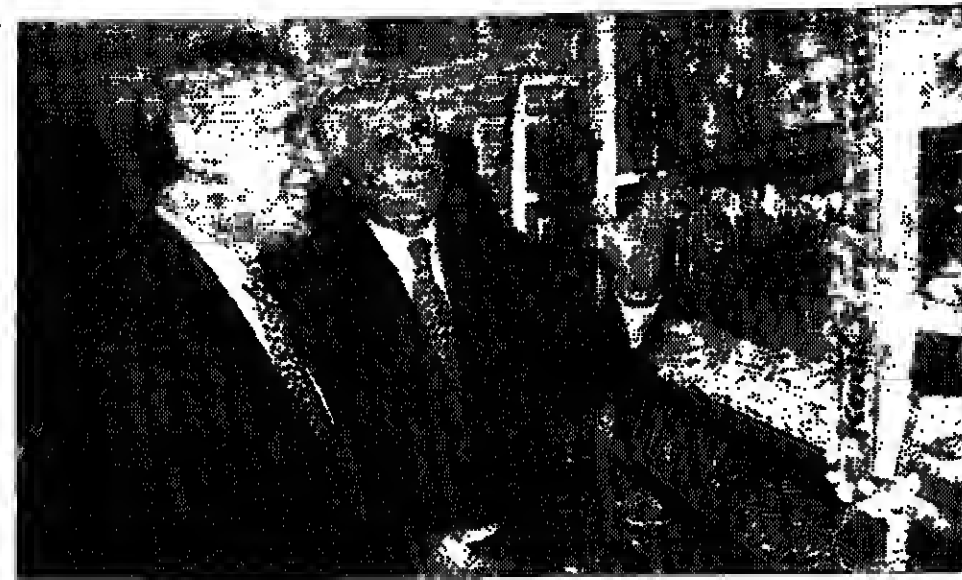
By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel on Monday announced agreement on a mechanism to expand the marketing of joint tourism packages in line with an accord the two countries signed in April 1995 as stipulated in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty of October 1994.

The agreement was reached during talks between tourism ministers Saleh Irsheidat of Jordan and Moshe Katsav of Israel held here early Monday.

In a joint statement they signed at the outset of a press conference after the meeting, the two ministers said both sides "emphasised the need for comprehensive and lasting peace in the region and the necessity of implementing all accords signed between Israel and Jordan in the framework of the peace process that will reflect positively on the promotion of tourism."

In comments at the press



Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irsheidat accompanies his Israeli counterpart Moshe Katsav on a visit to a souvenir shop in Amman on Sunday (Jordan Times photo)

conference, Mr. Katsav and Mr. Irsheidat emphasised the determination of the two countries to develop cooperation in tourism and said all obstacles and problems facing such cooperation were reviewed during their meeting.

The most tangible outcome of the meeting was

the creation of a joint technical commission to tackle bilateral as well as multilateral issues of concern to the tourism industry of the two countries.

The two sides also agreed to exchange information and tourism statistics, policies and surveys.

"Both delegations dis-

cussed the concept of the "Lowest Park on Earth" (on the shores of the Dead Sea) and stressed the importance of this project as its development, in all its aspects, and undertake to continue dealing with issues relating to this project within the

(Continued on page 3)

Sharon proposes railway to link W. Bank and Gaza

TEL AVIV (AP) — Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon said Monday he wants to build a rail link between the West Bank and Gaza Strip that would give the Palestinians more freedom of movement without compromising Israeli security.

"These railroads will provide a service to the (Palestinian) population," Mr. Sharon told Israeli Radio. Palestinian officials said Monday they supported the idea, though a Sharon spokesman said the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has been slow in responding to the Israeli plan. Mr. Sharon has traditionally held tough positions towards the Palestinians and was behind Israel's massive settlement construction drive in the West Bank and Gaza in the early 1990s.

However, since joining the new government of Benjamin Netanyahu, Mr. Sharon has portrayed himself as more pragmatic.

Sharon spokesman Raanan Gissin said Monday that a rail link between the West Bank and Gaza would also benefit Israel by improving security and getting hundreds of trucks off Israel's over-loaded road network.

"A train is much easier to control, to supervise, particularly since it can take in one convoy what it would take hundreds of trucks to carry," Mr. Gissin said.

Israeli travel restrictions make it difficult for Palestinians to travel between the West Bank and Gaza. Under a six-month blockade of the Palestinian areas, only about 50,000

workers from the West Bank and Gaza have permits to enter Israel.

Under the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy agreements, Palestinians were to have been able to drive between the West Bank and Gaza along four designated highways, so-called "safe passage" routes.

However, Israel never inaugurated the road link because of security concerns. In the spring, militants infiltrated into Israel from the West Bank and Gaza and set off four suicide bombs that killed 63 people, including the four assailants.

Palestinian trucks carrying cargo can travel between the West Bank and Gaza, but have to drive in convoys, with Israeli border police jeeps in front and back.

Mr. Sharon said Monday the proposed train line would run from the Gaza Strip to the southern and northern parts of the West Bank.

Existing lines laid by the British and left unused since before the 1948 Mideast war would be reopened. One new track would have to be laid from Kiryat Gat in southern Israel to the West Bank town of Tulkarm, near Hebron.

The northern branch line would connect Gaza to the West Bank town of Tulkarm, Mr. Sharon said.

Mr. Sharon has asked experts at Israel's railways authority to check whether the Gaza-West Bank would be feasible.

Mr. Sharon has already launched a plan to reopen the railroad between the Gaza Strip and seaport Ashdod in southern Israel.

Barak launches bid to replace Peres in party

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Former Foreign Minister and Army Chief of Staff Ehud Barak launched a campaign Monday to replace Shimon Peres as leader of Israel's opposition Labour Party.

"I am a candidate for the Labour Party leadership and plan later to run for the post of prime minister even if Shimon Peres also remains a candidate," Mr. Barak, 54, announced during a press conference.

The former general entered politics only a year ago, becoming interior minister in the government of Yitzhak Rabin.

After Mr. Peres took over as prime minister following Mr. Rabin's assassination in November, Mr. Barak became foreign minister and quickly filled the slain party chief's role as leader of Labour's hawks.

Mr. Peres, 73, a key architect of the peace accords with the Palestinians, was narrowly beaten by Benjamin Netanyahu of the right-wing Likud Party in May 29 elections.

Mr. Barak on Monday launched a scathing attack on Mr. Netanyahu.

"With amateurishness, crudity and record speed he has deteriorated Israel's position in all areas," Mr. Barak said. "There are difficulties with the Arabs (and) signs of recession in every corner."

"It's difficult to imagine the depth of the calamity if we go on this way," Mr. Barak said, adding that he has the best chances of unseating Mr. Netanyahu and bringing Mideast peace.

Israel's next general election is scheduled for 2000.

but could come sooner if Mr. Netanyahu's disparate coalition falls apart. Labour, meanwhile, is to hold a leadership ballot next year.

Mr. Peres, who has suggested he does not intend to step down voluntarily as party leader, told Channel 2 TV that Mr. Barak had informed him of his decision and "there's no problem." But associates said Mr. Peres was upset at the move.

Articulate and popular, the 54-year-old Barak is Israel's most decorated officer and enjoys the image of a soldier-intellectual. His perceived advantage is similar to that of the late Yitzhak Rabin, another former military hero who was chosen over Mr. Peres as Labour leader in 1992 and won elections that year by appealing to centrist voters who like tough talk and distrust the Arabs.

Asked how he felt about challenging the Nobel laureate who brought him into politics, Mr. Barak said: "I have made my decision and I am running — period."

His main opponent other than Mr. Peres for the party leadership could be Haim Ramon, a popular former health minister and union leader. But Mr. Ramon, 48, is tainted by the fact that he ran Labour's failed electoral effort and was responsible for the now lamented decision to run a low-key campaign downplaying the Rabin slaying.

Party insiders have suggested that Mr. Barak might find himself alone in the party race — with Mr. Peres eventually stepping aside and Mr. Ramon accepting a position as Mr. Barak's deputy.

Hamas calls for attacks on Jewish settlers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The militant movement Hamas called Monday for a campaign of "popular and military resistance" to halt Jewish settlement activity in the Palestinian territories.

"The Hamas movement calls on our militants and fighters to strike out strongly against Zionist settlers and their activities," the Palestinian group said in a statement faxed to news organisations.

In the communiqué, entitled "Resistance — the only way to stop settlements," the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) declared that "popular and military resistance is the only choice for the nation to face this situation." Following its trademark call for military action, the Hamas statement went on to offer practical advice to Palestinians facing confiscation of their lands, including a suggestion they plant trees or build enclosures around unused lands.

"Don't leave your land empty, cultivate it," the statement said. It also urged landowners "not to sign any documents in languages you don't understand" and to keep all documents concerning their property.

"Know your legal situation," said the group, which is violently opposed to peace agreements with Israel.

The group also declared that any threat of new confiscation of Palestinian lands should spark immediate protest demonstrations by all nearby residents.

"Our bodies will be a wall to protect Palestinian land and Palestinian aspirations," it said.

The movement also accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of Yasser Arafat of ignoring the Israeli government's new settlement campaign so as not to undermine negotiations which led to the first meeting last week between the Palestinian leader and right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We condemn the choices of the 'Oslo authority' which has weakened popular resistance to the settlements in order to organise the failed meet-

ing with Netanyahu," it said.

The Netanyahu government last month lifted a four-year-old freeze on most expansion of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories and subsequently approved the construction of several hundred new homes in the West Bank near Jerusalem.

At a news conference following his meeting with Mr. Arafat Wednesday at the Erez Crossing from Gaza into Israel, Mr. Netanyahu brushed aside questions about his government's settlement policy.

He said the future of Jewish settlements under the Oslo peace accords was only to be discussed in future negotiations on a definitive status for the Palestinian territories.

Journalist arrested
Palestinian security agents have arrested a journalist and leading member of the militant Islamic Jihad movement, Adnan Abu Hasnah, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate said

Monday.

A spokesman for the journalists' association said Palestinian preventive security police arrested Mr. Abu Hasnah at his Gaza City offices on Sunday.

They said the arresting agents gave no indication of why Mr. Abu Hasnah was being detained and there was no official confirmation of his arrest.

Mr. Abu Hasnah was formerly editor of the Islamic Jihad mouthpiece, Al-Istiqal, until the PNA closed the newspaper in March as part of its crackdown on militants following a spate of suicide bombings in Israel.

Islamic Jihad and the Hamas claimed responsibility for four suicide bombings against Israeli civilians which killed 58 people plus the bombers in February and March.

Following the attacks Israel and the PNA arrested hundreds of Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants.

The Palestinians have since released all but about 200 of the detained activists.

Over 400 million Chinese suffer from low iodine

BEIJING (R) — At least 400 million Chinese are suffering from iodine deficiency caused in part by consumption of low quality table salt, the China Daily said Monday. China would begin licensing salt producers, transporters and wholesalers as part of a drive to eliminate diseases caused by iodine deficiency by 2000, the newspaper quoted an official with industry regulator China National Salt Industry Corp. as saying. "It's known that at least 400 million Chinese suffer from iodine deficiency," the newspaper said. Consumers were being urged not to buy salt from private producers, many of whom had cut costs and prices by not adding iodine, the official was quoted as saying.

Hong Kong holds 41 overstayers

HONG KONG (AFP) — Police arrested 41 foreigners, mainly from South Asia, during raids under "Operation Sahara" targeting overstayers, a police spokesman said Monday. Police said a total of 33 men and eight women were rounded up Monday during the raid at Chung King Mansion, in the tourist area of Tsim Sha Tsui, for overstaying and other offences including possessing forged documents and breaching conditions of stay. Of the 41 people arrested, eight were from Bangladesh, seven from the Philippines and seven from Nigeria. Others came from Pakistan, India, China, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

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